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THE LIFE

OF

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT

VOL. III.

H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent

Engraved by Francis Holl from a Picture by F. Winterhalter.

In the poſseſsion of Her Majesty

THE LIFE

OF

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT

BY

THEODORE MARTIN

WITH A PORTRAIT

VOLUME THE THIRD

LONDON
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1877

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TO

THE QUEEN'S

MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MADAM,

When I placed in Your Majesty's hands the second volume of this work, I had hoped to complete it in another volume. But, as I advanced in my task, I found this to be impossible. No one feels more forcibly than I do the truth of the old Greek saying, that 'a big book is a big evil,'—a truth even more important to be borne in mind now than in the times for which it was first spoken, when books were both compact and few. Still I am not without hope, that the contents of the following pages will justify my decision to deal in somewhat ample detail with the very interesting period to which they relate.

The aim I have set to myself throughout in this Biography has been, not to present my own view of the Prince's character, but to place upon record materials by which every careful and unprejudiced reader may judge of that character for himself. The mass of these materials which Your Majesty has placed at my command is very great. For example, the Prince's papers on the Oriental Question—from 1853 to 1857—extend to no fewer than fifty folio volumes; and, while they show the importance which he attached to that

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question, they contain so rich a profusion of materials of the highest value, that the embarrassment of selection has been not the least of the difficulties which I have had to encounter in the execution of my task. They furnish, moreover, a triumphant vindication of the Prince from the obloquy and misrepresentation which during the same period he was compelled to undergo in silence. I could not, therefore, reconcile it to my duty as his biographer to withhold the evidence of the part, so valuable to Your Majesty, and therefore to England, which he played during the great struggle of the Crimean War.

In doing this, I can scarcely hope to have escaped the risk of being charged with passing upon occasion from the sphere of the biographer into that of the historian. But, in truth, the Prince's life being, as it was, engrossed with the great events of a time which has already become historical, this was a risk which must perforce be run by his biographer, however much he might feel himself fettered by the proximity of the events, and by a proper regard for the feelings of such actors upon the political stage as may still survive, or of the representatives of those who have passed away.

In any case, I trust it will be as clear to all who may read this volume, as it is to myself, that in all the Prince's dealings with men, and with the questions great and small, on which his unsleeping spirit was evermore employed, to be just,—to be considerate,—to look beyond 'the ignorant present' into 'the seeds of time,'—to hold at bay the passions and prejudices, by which judgment is clouded, and action turned awry, was the condition of mind to which he never ceased to aspire. And surely it is not unimportant, at a time when the Eastern Question has again forced itself upon the consideration of Europe, that the opinions should be made known of one, to whom the welfare, not of Your Majesty's kingdom only, but of mankind, was so vitally dear,—of one, whose political sagacity was leant upon, as this volume will show, by some of the greatest and most experienced statesmen of his age.

I cannot conclude without again expressing my gratitude to Your Majesty for the unreserve with which the Prince's papers have been placed at my disposal, and for the absolute freedom with which I have been allowed to record within these pages my own impressions from the facts and opinions of which they form a marvellous record. Remembering that truth and sincerity were the twin lodestars of the Prince's life,—that it would therefore have been his wish to be spoken of simply as he was,—I have striven to prove myself worthy of the confidence reposed in me in the only way that I am sure would be agreeable to Your Majesty, by using in all sincerity the knowledge of his opinions and actions which it has been my privilege to obtain. The painter is no master of his craft, who will not place upon his canvas the flaws and blemishes that are as much a part of a face as its finest features. Had I found such in the subject of my picture, I should not have feared to find a place for them in it. My difficulty has been, that in all my researches I have come upon no such defect as would have furnished that relief of shadow, which would have made the portrait, if not more impressive in itself, yet more acceptable to many who are reluctant to believe in the highest order of human worth.

I have the honour to be,

Madam,

Your Majesty's very devoted

Subject and Servant,

Theodore Martin.

Bryntysilio, near Llangollen:
11*th October*, 1877.

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THE LIFE

OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT.

CHAPTER LI.

It was well for the Prince's peace of mind, no less than for his reputation, that the calumnies of his detractors were pushed so far as to compel the public notice which was taken of them in Parliament, as mentioned in the preceding chapter. What had occurred was only a fresh illustration of the old truth, that slander is only dangerous so long as it is confined to sinuous by-paths and vague innuendoes. Those who attacked the Prince, either from malice, or recklessness, or political animosity, must have been mortified to see that, meaning to injure, they had in fact done him signal good. His past services to the country, as the bosom-counsellor of the Sovereign, were made clear, and no challenge was thenceforth likely to be put forward of his right to bring the daily growing treasures of his thought and experience to the aid of the Sovereign and her responsible advisers. 'Fortunately,' as Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Prince (3rd February, 1854) 'the whole edifice of falsehood and misrepresentation is completely overthrown, and we may trust that a great reaction will now take place, in full proportion to the measure of calumny and injustice which has prevailed. They will always remain, however, as a signal example of popular delusion, and, although we consider ourselves to be an enlightened people, I know no greater instance of stupid credulity than has been exhibited in the disgraceful proceedings of the last few weeks.'

No man bore calumny better than the Prince. He regarded it, we have seen, as inseparable from his position; and, happily, he was able to say, with all the sincerity of one who, besides being modest by nature, was habitually stern in his judgment of himself, 'Nothing has been brought against me which is not absolutely untrue' (*ante*, vol. ii. 561). Nevertheless the pain occasioned to the Prince, and perhaps even more to the Queen, by these persistent and well-studied calumnies was very great. In proportion to the value they both set upon the good-will and esteem of the nation, was the grief expressed by the Queen, in a letter already quoted (*ante*, ii. 541), 'that any portion of her subjects should thus requite the unceasing labours of the Prince' for the welfare and honour of England. There are few of us who can recall without a pang what we have suffered, to find ourselves misunderstood by those who, we have thought, must know us best—suffered not in the moral shock only, but in the angry soreness of wounded affection. Then it was, that we have felt the full force of Coleridge's beautiful saying, 'That to be wroth with those we love doth work like madness in the brain.' But if this be so, how much stronger must the feeling be, where the love that is wounded is no mere personal feeling, narrow at the best, but the yearning regard of the Sovereign for the people whom she loves,—the people, on the fulness of whose trust she can alone rely to take the sting from the misrepresentations to which a monarch will always be exposed, but which, by the necessity of her position, she must bear in silence. The shafts aimed at the Prince, the Queen could not but feel were aimed at herself. But the sense of personal injury was swallowed up in indignation at the wrong done to one whom she knew, as no one else could know, to be the very soul of goodness and truth, of honour, and of devotion to the kingdom, over which she was strengthened to reign by his wise and loving help. What wonder, then, if she, who had felt the wrong so deeply, was no less deeply moved by the desire now everywhere shown to obliterate the painful impressions of the last few weeks by a general acknowledgment of the Prince's position, and of the prudence and sagacity with which he had used it. 'That black time,' Her Majesty writes to Baron Stockmar (15th April, 1854), 'when foul calumny strove to blind our deluded people, vanished from the hour Parliament spoke of it; and this serves to show how it was got up, and how little it had taken root!'

Had it been otherwise, the strain upon both the Queen and Prince would have been intolerable. They now saw close before them the prospect of a great war, which, whatever its issue or duration, must put to proof the utmost resources of the country, and all the energy and endurance of its people. The thought of this struggle and all that it involved—a thought that day and night was weighing on their hearts—would have been too hard to bear, had any shadow been left of the distrust which had been attempted to be sown between the people and themselves. Instead of this, however, the spirit of mutual reliance which had grown up between the Crown and the nation during the present reign, so far from being shaken by the attacks on the Prince, had been strengthened by the frank explanations for which they had given occasion. Each knew the other better than before, and with this knowledge in their hearts could confront with a calmer courage the difficulties and dangers of the impending struggle.

In a supreme degree, too, the Queen and Prince were able to find strength in the love which is the best restorative for the weariness and the heartache of all mortal life. 'Trials we must have; but what are they if we are together!' On the same day, the anniversary of her marriage, on which, as we have seen (*ante*, vol. ii. 565) the Queen's heart overflowed in these simple words—simple, yet how eloquent!—their children had prepared for them one of those graceful surprises, with which their affection never failed to mark its periodical recurrence. The Baron and Baroness Bunsen were among the guests at Windsor upon the occasion, and to this happy accident we owe the following graceful report by the Baroness of the 'Masque' which the Royal children had devised for the occasion:—

'We followed the Queen and Prince Albert a long way, through one large room after another, till we came to one, where hung a red curtain, which was presently drawn aside, for a representation of the Four Seasons, studied and contrived by the Royal children as a surprise to the Queen, in celebration of the day. First appeared Princess Alice as the Spring, scattering flowers, and reciting verses, which were taken from Thomson's *Seasons;* she moved gracefully and spoke in a distinct and pleasing manner with excellent modulation, and a tone of voice sweet and penetrating like that of the Queen. Then the curtain was drawn, and the scene changed, and the Princess Royal represented Summer, with Prince Arthur stretched upon the sheaves, as if tired with the heat and harvest-work; another change, and Prince Alfred, with a crown of vine leaves and the skin of a panther, represented Autumn—looking very well. Then followed a change to a winter landscape, and the Prince of Wales represented Winter, with a cloak covered with icicles (or what seemed such), and the Princess Louise, a charming little muffled-up figure, busy keeping up a fire; the Prince reciting (as all had done) passages more or less modified from Thomson. Then followed the last change, when all the Seasons were grouped together, and far behind, on a height, appeared Princess Helena, with a long white veil hanging on both sides down to her feet, holding a long cross, and pronouncing a blessing upon the Queen and Prince. These verses were composed for the occasion. I understood them to say, that *Saint Helena*, remembering her own British extraction, came to pronounce a benediction upon the rulers of the country; and I think it must have been so intended, because Helena, the mother of Constantine (said to have discovered the remains of the Cross which bore the Saviour), was a native of Britain, and she is always represented leaning upon a large cross. But your father understood that *Britannia* was intended as blessing the Royal pair. In either view of the subject, the Princess Helena looked very charming. This was the close; but, by command of the Queen, the curtain was again withdrawn, and we saw the whole Royal Family together, who came down severally from their raised platform; also the baby, Prince Leopold, was carried in by his nurse, and looked at us all with big eyes, stretching out his arms to be taken by the Prince Consort.'—(*Bunsen's Life*, ii. 328.)

Although the Queen's Speech in opening Parliament (30th January) had spoken of the persistent efforts being still continued, which Her Majesty had made, in conjunction with her allies, to preserve and restore peace between Russia and Turkey, these words inspired little confidence even in the minds of those who clung to the hope that war might still be averted, coupled as they were with the intimation in the same sentence, that she had thought it 'requisite to make a further augmentation of her naval and military forces, with the view of supporting her representations, and of more effectually contributing to the restoration of peace.' Diplomacy indeed might still be busy. Russia, on the one hand, might not yet have despaired of detaching France from the English alliance, and of inducing Austria and Prussia to withdraw the pressure which, in concert with the Western Powers, they had hitherto been exerting to induce the Emperor Nicholas to recall his troops from the Principalities. England, on the other hand, had yet to assure herself that France had one common object with herself in embarking on the defence of Turkey, and might be relied on to bear her full share of the burden of this defence, till that object was attained. But from the moment that the combined fleets of France and England entered the Black Sea, with the avowed purpose of shutting up the Russian fleet in Sebastopol, the hope of a peaceful adjustment of the disputes between Russia and Turkey was at an end. Our Ambassador at St. Petersburg might indeed represent that our ships had been sent there for the protection of the Turkish territory and the Turkish flag only. But was it to be thought that a power like Russia, which had been accustomed to strike, where she could and when she could, against all who ventured to resist her imperious dictates, would admit the distinction between the defiant defence of an adversary with whom she was at war, and actual warfare against herself?[1]

Up to this time, however, and indeed for some time afterwards, a war with Russia was far from popular in France.[2] Of this fact the Emperor of the French was necessarily well aware, and he may be presumed to have been much influenced by it in the final attempt which he made at the end of January to persuade the Czar to withdraw from the false position in which he had placed himself by his occupation of the Principalities. In an autograph letter (29th January) he laid before the Czar his view of the state of the question in terms which, little likely as they were to be acceptable at St. Petersburg, could not be regarded as otherwise than moderate. If the two Maritime Powers, he urged, had sent their squadrons to the Bosphorus, it was because Turkey, threatened in her independence, her provinces seized as a material guarantee for the fulfilment of a treaty which she had not broken, had claimed a support to which, by the justice of her cause, as affirmed by the combined voice of Austria, Prussia, England, and France, she was entitled. Up to the day when the Turkish fleet, 'riding quietly at anchor in a Turkish port,' had been destroyed, 'in spite of the assurance that there was no wish to commence an aggressive war, and in spite of the vicinity of our squadrons,' the Western Powers had maintained a passive attitude. 'After that event,' the letter continued, 'it was no longer our policy which received a check, it was our military honour. . . . The sound of the cannon-shot at Sinope reverberated painfully in the hearts of all those who in England and in France respect national dignity. All shared in the sentiment that, wherever our cannon can reach, our allies ought to be respected. Out of this feeling arose the order given to our squadrons to enter the Black Sea and to prevent, by force if necessary, the recurrence of a similar event.' But a bitterer sting was delivered in the words that followed, which reminded the Czar that his new policy of 'material guarantees' could be effectively turned against himself. In prohibiting the navigation of the Russian fleet upon the Black Sea, he was told, the Maritime Powers had acted upon the conviction, that it was 'important during the war to preserve a guarantee equivalent in force to the occupation of the Turkish territory, and thus facilitate the conclusion of peace by having the power of making a desirable exchange.'

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[1] It was accordingly denounced in a letter by Count Nesselrode to Baron Brunnow (16th January) as 'an act of flagrant hostility.' 'As for ourselves, he added, 'it is impossible for us to look upon such a resolution in any other light than as a violence offered to our belligerent rights.'

[2] Writing to Sir James Graham from Paris (24th January, 1854), Sir John Burgoyne says: 'I was much surprised to hear that a war with Russia on the present question was very unpopular in France. This must be very embarrassing to the Emperor.'

After this preface the Emperor of the French must have been singularly credulous if, as he goes on to say, he felt assured the Czar would take a pacific course in the alternative presented to his choice of either a definitive understanding with the Western Powers or a decided rupture. However this may be, it is professedly under this conviction that he proposed, that the combined fleets should leave the Black Sea, the Russians at the same time evacuating the Principalities, and that Turkish and Russian plenipotentiaries should negotiate a Convention, which should then be submitted to the Conference of the Four Powers in Vienna.

When this letter was submitted to our Government for approval, Lord Clarendon, although he could scarcely approve of the suggestion that Russia and Turkey alone should at this stage negotiate a Convention, felt it the less necessary to raise any objection, because he foresaw very clearly that nothing could possibly come of such an appeal. The information which had reached him from our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, as to the state of public feeling there, made it obvious that, even if the Czar had been disposed to make concessions, the angry passions which he had evoked in his subjects would not have permitted him to recede. Writing to Lord Clarendon on the 2nd of January, Sir Hamilton Seymour said of Count Nesselrode:—

> 'He exerts himself in the cause of moderation, and except him, and in a less degree Count Orloff and Count Kisseleff, I should be perplexed to name any Russian, whose voice is raised in the same sense. It is to this very circumstance, that is to be ascribed the remarkable unpopularity which now attaches to Count Nesselrode, and the intrigues which are set on foot against him. . . . I hold it to be certain that, if peace still exists, it is in a great measure attributable to the Chancellor, and that the Emperor is infinitely more moderate than the immense bulk of his subjects. This fact does not exculpate His Majesty from having lent himself to plans which have led to this state of things. I long since stated to your Lordship, that a spirit would be evoked by the Russian policy, which it would be found very difficult to lay; but now that the spirit has come forth, so far from the Emperor being amongst those most eager to obey its mandates, it is already very apparent, that his popularity is shaken by the resistance which he opposes to public opinion, while, as for

the Chancellor, he is openly spoken of as an alien, a traitor, a man bought by English gold. The feeling to which I allude is especially acted upon by the rumours which are in circulation of the entrance of the Allied fleets into the Black Sea, and a person of my acquaintance, who lives almost entirely in Russian society, acquaints me, that the language which he now hears around him is, that Russia will be humiliated, and that the Emperor will show that he has lost all sense of dignity, if he defers marking his resentment by sending off the French and English Ministers, and by declaring war upon their two countries.'

Surrounded by the feeling here described, chafed by the successful resistance to his troops which the Turks had been able hitherto to maintain, and stung to the quick by being told, as he had been for the first time by the French Emperor's letter, that the Western Powers had determined to prohibit to the Russians the navigation of the Black Sea, the Czar's reply could be of only one tenor. In it every step he had taken was justified. France and England were taunted with weakness in allowing the Porte to modify the Vienna Note after it had been approved by themselves and accepted by Russia,[3] and a return to the Russian programme—in other words, the adoption of the construction put by the Czar upon the Treaty of Kainardji as to the Protectorate of the Greek Christians in Turkey—was announced as forming the only opening for friendly discussion and a possible good understanding. 'Whatever,' the letter continued, 'your Majesty may decide, menaces will not induce me to recede. My confidence is in God and in my right, and Russia, as I can guarantee, will prove herself in 1854 what she was in 1812.[4] . . . Let your fleet limit itself to prevent the Turks from sending additional forces to the theatre of war. I willingly promise that they shall have nothing to fear from my attempts. Let them send a negotiator. I will receive him in a suitable manner. My conditions are known in Vienna. That is the only basis on which I can allow discussion.'

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[3] After war had been declared by the Western Powers, this argument was again addressed in an official declaration published in the *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg* (13th of April). The official answer in the *Moniteur* on this head was conclusive. In the Vienna Note, it bore, 'the Powers had laid down principles *which, loyally admitted, might then have solved the difference;* but the commentary which that Note received from the Count de Nesselrode attested that the Russian Cabinet did not accept them, except by attaching to them a signification very different from the idea of the Conference of Vienna, as was admitted by all the Governments represented in that Conference.'

'My conditions are known in Vienna.' Before this letter reached its destination they were known in Paris also, and in London, and known moreover to be utterly inadmissible. Charged with these conditions, Count Orloff arrived in the Austrian capital on the 28th of January; and after a few days of mysterious reserve, spent in trying to ascertain the probable attitude of Austria in the event of war, he submitted them to the Conference. The Protocol of the 13th of January, embodying the views of the Conference as to the conditions on which peace should be restored between Russia and Turkey, was rejected, and a new set of conditions was proposed as the basis for negotiation. The conditions were substantially these:—the confirmation of all existing treaties and conventions between Russia and the Porte, with a specific recognition in the sense contended for by Russia of her Protectorate of the Greek Christians, which was the origin of the quarrel, and an engagement by Turkey not to furnish an asylum for political refugees. These were, in fact, a considerable increase upon the first obnoxious demands by Prince Menschikoff (see *ante*, vol. ii. p. 510), and on the 2nd of February they were declared by the representatives of the Four Powers to be inadmissible, and such as ought not to be submitted to the Porte.

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[4] Had the Emperor of Russia wished to turn the tide of feeling in France against himself, he could scarcely have chosen any means more likely to effect this object than this allusion to the events of 1812. As was soon apparent, it changed the apathy to the Eastern Question which had hitherto prevailed in France into eager interest.

A further disappointment awaited the Czar in the failure of Count Orloff to secure a promise of strict neutrality on the part of Austria in the event of a war. Pressed by the young Emperor to say if he was prepared to pledge his master not to cross the Danube, to seek no acquisition of territory, and to evacuate the Principalities when the war was over, Count Orloff replied that the Czar would come under no such engagement. Then must Austria, was the Emperor's rejoinder, be equally free to act as her interests and dignity might direct. Meanwhile, she would continue to be guided by the principles which she had adopted in concert with the other three Great Powers.[5]

While these things were passing at Vienna, Baron de Budberg, who had been engaged on behalf of Russia in a similar attempt at the Court of Berlin, had met with no better success. The King, although from various causes timidly obsequious to his brother-in-law the Czar, and much under the influence of a Russian party, which was then predominant at the Prussian Court, was kept in check—although only for the moment—by the firmness of his Minister, Baron Manteuffel, and refused to commit himself to any course of action inconsistent with the principles assented to by his representative at the Vienna Conference. But while he concurred in the fresh Protocol of the 2nd of February, which defined the views of the Four Powers as to the basis for a peaceful settlement of the differences between Russia and Turkey, he hung back resolutely from any pledge of active interference to enforce the decision at which the Conference had arrived. As Lord Bloomfield, our Ambassador at Berlin, wrote to Lord Clarendon (28th February), 'It is impossible to make these people understand the duties and responsibilities of a Great Power, and their chief thought in this question appears to be the chance of playing a great card hereafter in Germany, when the war shall have lasted a few years.'

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[5] The haughty language of Count Orloff, and the air of tutelage towards Austria, which was implied in the tender of guarantees by his master against whatever consequences might result to Austria from adopting the line of strict neutrality, contributed to the failure of his mission. Austria lost no time in asserting her independence, by supporting, through her Minister at St. Petersburg, the Ultimatum which was soon afterwards addressed to the Emperor of Russia by France and England.

Such was the state of affairs when the Prince, in accordance with his practice, reduced to writing his survey of the political position, and his estimate of its probable development, in the following Memorandum:—

'8th March, 1854.

'The attitude of Austria and Prussia in regard to the Eastern Question is naturally of the utmost importance in its bearing upon the course of the events to which this question is certain to give rise. That stage of the question is passed in which a peaceful solution was still conceivable. The Emperor has himself cut off the possibility of drawing back, and is bent upon war. This being so, every proposal for further negotiations can only be regarded by the Maritime Powers as having for their object to deprive them of the very special advantage which they will enjoy from the outbreak of hostilities before the ice begins to break up. Such negotiations will therefore be desired by Russia, while they will not be tolerated by the Allied Powers, being, as they are, adverse to their interests. The main point is to bring the war that is now inevitable to a close with all possible despatch. This can only be done if the European Powers stick firmly together. Their doing so will give at the same time the surest guarantee that the question for which the war is undertaken shall not degenerate into others which are fundamentally alien to it.

'Whether the Turkish Empire as such will be able to maintain its existence or not is not the question; and it would be useless to seek to determine this problem by anticipation. But it is quite certain that, if Europe maintains a united front against Russia, the solution must be in accordance with European interests, because it makes the realisation of the schemes of Russia impossible. On the other hand, it is said, "A war against Russia is foolish, for she cannot be conquered!" Russia, no doubt, is not a country to be conquered in the sense in which Napoleon in 1812 imagined it might be; but it is not therefore invincible, as people there and in Germany say it is. For the vital force of a State does not rest in an unshattered army and in the maintenance of a wide expanse of territory, but in the stability and abundance of its material resources, and in its political homogeneousness and commanding position. Both may in the case of Russia be brought into extreme peril. By the loss of her western frontier territory she might even be reduced to a purely Sclavo-Asiatic State, which would cease to play an important part in the Councils of Europe.

'If this be the general posture of affairs, what is the position which Austria and Prussia at this moment occupy in regard to them? To Austria, Turkey is an object of paramount interest, inasmuch as it is of moment to her to shake herself free of Russia, to which she has hitherto been bound by her dread of revolution. She fears Russia, she fears revolution. As regards the latter, she could not possibly desire a stronger protection than that which is offered to her by the alliance with the liberal Western Powers, whose separation from the cause of revolution she insures by this alliance. This is very clearly perceived even by the Revolutionary Committee, Mazzini, Kossuth, &c. Austria, while she does not trust Prussia, at the same time regards herself as not strong enough without Prussia, but still she is quite alive to the bearing of her own proper policy.

'Prussia—unhappy country! The King is the tool of Russian dictation, partly from fear of Russia, partly from an absurdly sentimental feeling for the Emperor as the representative of the Holy Alliance. He believes himself to have shown great and dignified independence in declining a Russian alliance, that could have only the one object of drawing Prussia into conflict with the Western Powers in support of a Russian policy, which Prussia had joined with the three Powers in declaring, by Protocol, to be injurious and dangerous to herself and to Europe! Anyhow the King declines all co-operation with the West.

'The Court-party, from habit partly, and partly from self-interest, is servile to Russia, worships the Emperor as the champion of reaction, sees its own downfall in whatever weakens him, and so it besieges the King with insinuations against France and England, with apprehensions of Russian vengeance, and hypocritical cant about Christian duty in the East.

'The Anti-Russian *patriotic* party is no doubt anxious for war against Russia, provided it be waged by the Western Powers and Austria, but it has no wish that Prussia herself shall participate in the danger. Prussia is to profit by the opportunity the war will give her of stepping in as Umpire, by which she fancies she may give the turn to the European balance at some decisive moment, and snatch for herself the reward, which she will think she has deserved.

'This is a flagitious policy, and assuredly it was not very wise to have given it expression, as has been already done. This is the policy of 1805, which led to the disasters of 1806. As its natural consequence Prussia will be hated by all parties, and as her tortuous views are already proclaimed in every State in Europe, the feeling is sure to have been roused, that it will be well to be beforehand with her. If when a peace is arrived at, to which Prussia has in no way contributed, but in the way of which she has on the contrary acted as a stumbling-block, she should then set up claims, she will be astounded at the manner in which they will be received.

'That every good German desires the consolidation, perhaps the aggrandisement, of Prussia, is intelligible; but physical expansion is, and ought to be, the result of moral strength and struggle, and people ought to see that the war with Russia would offer many chances to attain the desired object in a way which Europe would regard as consonant with her own interests, and those of civilisation. On the other hand, the policy of seeking to embarrass Europe now, in order to fish in troubled waters later on, cannot fail to produce the opposite effect.

'That Prussia should not permit herself to be used blindly by the Western Powers as a mere tool, is only as it should be. But it is wholly and solely the fault of her Government, if she does not obtain from Austria and the Western Powers treaties and guarantees, which would smooth the way to an alliance, such as could not fail to operate to her *legitimate* advantage.'

CHAPTER LII.

The advisers of the Emperor Nicholas—and such advisers, it has been confidently stated, there were—who told him that the fighting days of England were over, and that her sons cared too much for money and their own ease to risk either in an European quarrel, must by this time have been dismayed to see how greatly they had been mistaken. A forty-years' peace had not changed the character of the people. They were far too confident, indeed, in their own strength to be prone to take offence; but touched on a point of honour, or menaced with an encroachment on their possessions or their rights, they were as ready as of yore to confront the hazards of war at any sacrifice of blood and treasure.

The part which Russia had played in helping the despotic Sovereigns to crush the recent struggles of their subjects for constitutional freedom had predisposed the British people to look with extreme distrust on any aggressive advance which she might make in the East of Europe. They were, moreover, impatient at the idea of the world being held in awe by a gigantic power, which they had seen imposing its will upon countries of a higher civilisation than its own, and which they believed to be the great barrier to the advancement of free opinion and of human progress. Little as Englishmen loved the Turks, and deeply as they detested the oppression which the Porte practised towards its subjects, both Mussulman and Christian, they remembered too well what Russia had done and was doing elsewhere, to hear without impatience of her being put forward as the champion of humanity and of Christian independence.

In those days the great body of Englishmen had not ceased to believe that Russia had designs upon Constantinople; and to these designs they would not suffer themselves to be blinded by mere protestations that the policy of Peter the Great and Catherine was not the policy of their successors, or that the 'long-cherished ambition of the nation,' as it was designated by Lord John Russell, 'would be surrendered even at the bidding of its ruler.'[1]

Common men might not be able to estimate all the dangers to Europe which lurked in any disturbance of its territorial divisions, but there were few who could not appreciate how important it was to England, that the entrance to the Black Sea should continue in the hands of a neutral and friendly Power, and that it should not pass into the possession of one by whom it might be used with formidable effect for the purposes of a boundless and unscrupulous ambition. Even Austria and Prussia, subservient as they were known to be to Russian influence, had concurred with the Western Powers in declaring that the maintenance of 'the state of possession in the East was necessary for the tranquillity of all the other Powers,' and that 'the existence of Turkey within the limits assigned to her by treaty' was 'one of the necessary conditions of the balance of power in Europe;'[2] but, notwithstanding this clear expression of the views of united Europe, Russia continued to maintain a position that was wholly incompatible with them. The Emperor Nicholas might disclaim, as he did, any intention to assail the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; but who could credit this assurance when in the same breath he declared that his armies, which had invaded Turkish territory, were there, and would remain there, to extort concessions which would transfer from the Sultan to himself the allegiance of twelve millions of Turkish subjects, and place at his mercy the future independence of the Ottoman Empire? The peace of Europe had been lawlessly broken; an immense army set in motion, which, whatever pretext might be put forward, could only have conquest for its object. But if Turkey were struck down now, who could foretell what part of Europe might next be singled out for assault? Too long had the Russian autocrat been accustomed to 'bestride the narrow world like a Colossus,' and throughout England an all but universal feeling had grown up, that the time had come, in our own immediate interests, no less than for the sake of the future welfare of the world, to let it be seen, that we at least were not content to

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[1] In his Despatch of 9th February, 1853, to Sir Hamilton Seymour—*Eastern Papers,* Part V. p. 7. It will be seen from Sir Hamilton Seymour's report of his interview with the Emperor Nicholas, in which this Despatch was read and discussed, that the Emperor was compelled to admit the aptness of Lord John Russell's words—(*Ibid.* p. 11.)

[2] *Protocol of a Conference of the Representatives of the Four Powers held at Vienna,* 5th December, 1853.

> Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
> To find ourselves dishonourable graves,

but were determined to resist the further usurpations of an imperious will, and to vindicate the cause of right against might, although in doing so we had to fight for a dynasty, which we knew to be corrupt, and all but despaired of seeing reformed.

So prevalent was this feeling, that the remonstrances of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, who represented the small Peace party in this country, were listened to with impatience, not unmixed with indignation. 'Turkey,' said Mr. Cobden, speaking at Manchester in January, 'is a decaying country, and the Turks cannot be permanently maintained as a ruling power in Europe.' So far he commanded a general assent; but when he went on to contemplate with complacency the possession of Constantinople by the Russians, he cut himself adrift from the sympathies of the mass of his fellow-countrymen. 'If Russia,' he continued, 'obtained Constantinople, she must cease to be barbarous before she could become formidable; and if she made a great navy. it must be by doing as the Venetians, the Dutch, the English, and the Americans did,—by the accumulation of wealth, the exercise of industry, and the superior skill and intelligence of her artisans.' Mr. Bright at the same meeting adopted a similar line of argument. 'Turkey is a decaying nation, Russia an advancing one; Russia, though a despotism now, will not be a despotism always. We had a despotism once, and it gave us trouble to get rid of it. Russia is in its natural progress from a bad to a better state. If we had not interfered, the difference between Russia and Turkey would have been settled long before this—settled by the concessions of Turkey.'

No eloquence could, however, disguise the hollowness of arguments like these. If, indeed, Turkey were destined to fall, must she of necessity fall into the hands of a nation admittedly barbarous—exchange her own despotism for a despotism more absolute and relentless? Was the Turkish nation to have no voice to say by whom it should be governed? Must it submit itself to the Russians, whom it avowedly held in abhorrence? And during the period—how long who could say?—when Russia was raising herself from admitted barbarism to a merely possible civilisation, what might not be the miseries of the conquered Turks, what the turmoil into which Europe might be thrown by 'barbarians,' whose means of aggression had been infinitely augmented by the possession of some of its fairest and most fertile provinces? With Russia at Constantinople would the balance of Europe be any longer the same? Above all, would England's position be the same, or could that position be maintained except at the cost of vastly augmented armaments both by land and sea? 'Concessions by Turkey?' Had Europe no interest in these concessions? Was it of no moment to her, that Turkey should be asked to concede terms fatal to her very existence as a nation, and which would have altered the political situation of the civilised world? If Turkey, weak, decrepid, 'dying,' as she was said to be,[3] refused to be coerced, was it not the duty of England, and of every European Power, to uphold her in the struggle for independence? With such obvious considerations present to all men's minds, the great leaders of the Manchester School found their influence shaken, even among those who had long been accustomed to accept their guidance with implicit faith.

A letter of the Prince's to King Leopold depicts so forcibly what was thought and felt by England in entering upon the defence of Turkey, that, although written (20th July) some months after the time with which we are now dealing, some passages of it will not be out of place here:—

'We supported Russia,' he writes, 'in her demands at Constantinople, until it became clear, that she was bent on annihilating the independence of the Porte. It was not from mere selfishness, and with a view to making cat's-paws of other Powers, but in order to avert the possibility of war, that England pressed for the *concert Européen.* Austria's and Prussia's faint-heartedness and regard for the Russians made our efforts in this direction fruitless. Thereupon England and France alone took upon themselves the burden of protecting the Porte. It is quite true, that our stupid club-house politicians and journalists underrated Russia's strength. But every statesman knew how heavy was the task we had undertaken. A *Military* European concert might even now bring the war to a speedy close, restore peace, and put the Porte under proper conditions. But if England and France have to carry on the war single-handed with Russia, it must become a war of extermination; just as, if twenty men have to arrest a criminal, it is a simple affair to seize and bind him and carry him off to prison; whereas if one man has to do it, he does so at the risk of a struggle for life and death. All Europe, Belgium and Germany included, have the greatest interest in the integrity and independence of the Porte being secured for the future, but a still greater, in Russia being defeated and chastised. For it is to weak States above all others of importance as a precedent, that, if a strong neighbour seeks to oppress them, all Europe should come to their aid, and repel the oppressor. This is the true state of the case, and the politicians of the Continent should not be misled by their soreness of feeling at the rough and unmeasured terms in which it has been expressed by the English journals. To be plain-spoken, perhaps not over-scrupulous, is their vocation.

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[3] So far back as 1844 the Emperor Nicholas had said, '*Il y a dans mon Cabinet deux opinions sur la Turquie: l'une, qu'elle est mourante; l'autre qu'elle est morte—la dernière est la mienne*'—(See *Bunsen's Life*, vol. ii. p. 327.)

'Another mistake which people abroad make, is to ascribe to England a policy based upon material interests and cold calculation. Her policy is one of pure feeling, and therefore often illogical. The government is a popular government, and the masses upon whom it rests only feel, and do not think. In the present instance their feeling is something of this sort:[1] "The Emperor of Russia is a tyrant, the enemy of all liberty on the Continent, the oppressor of Poland. He wanted to coerce the poor Turk. The Turk is a fine fellow; he has braved the rascal, let us rush to his assistance. The Emperor is no gentleman, as he has spoken a lie to our Queen. Down with the Emperor of Russia! Napoleon for ever! He is the nephew of his uncle, whom we defeated at

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[1] Down to this point the letter is in German. The dramatic and humorous instinct of the Prince then carries him into our terse British vernacular.

Waterloo. We were afraid of his invading us? Quite the contrary! He has forgotten all that is past, and is ready to fight with us for the glorious cause against the oppressor of liberty. He may have played the French some tricks, but they are an unruly set and don't deserve any better. D—— all the German Princes who won't go with us against the Russian, because they think they want him to keep down their own people. The worst of them is the King of Prussia, who ought to know better." '

Loud, however, as was the general voice for war, the Ministry were met by the Opposition with the reproach, that, if they had made it clear from the first that they would regard as a *casus belli* any invasion by Russia of the Turkish provinces, that step would never have been taken. On the first night of the Session this view was urged with great vigour by Lord Derby, who charged them with having misled the Emperor Nicholas into the belief that England would under no circumstances oppose with arms any encroachments by Russia upon Turkish territory. Russia, he maintained, had always recoiled from aggression when she was boldly met, and she would have done so now, had she been frankly told, that in any such aggression it was not only Turkey she would have to encounter, but the combined forces of England and of France also. Appealing in support of this view to the past history of Russian policy, he said :—

> ' For the last 150 years it has been a policy of gradual aggression—not a policy of conquest, but of aggression. It has never proceeded by storm, but by sap and mine. The first process has been invariably that of fomenting discontent and dissatisfaction amongst the subjects of subordinate States—then proffering mediation—then offering assistance to the weaker party—then declaring the independence of that party—then placing that independence under the protection of Russia; and, finally, from protection proceeding to the incorporation, one by one, of those States into the gigantic body of the Russian Empire. I say

nothing of Poland, or of Livonia, but I speak of Mingrelia, Imeritia, and the countries of the Caspian,—even as far as the boundary of the Araxes; and, again, the Crimea itself. This has been the one course which Russia has invariably pursued; but although she has pursued this steady course for 150 years, she has from time to time desisted from her schemes where she has found they met with opposition, and has never carried any one of those schemes into effect where she has been certain to meet the opposition of this country.'

But the argument failed, unless it could be shown that the Emperor Nicholas continued to regard the opposition of this country with the same apprehension as he and his predecessors had formerly done. But who could answer for this? When, at any former period, had a moment presented itself so favourable for the accomplishment of the hereditary policy of Russia? The Turkey, which he had regarded as dead in 1844, no doubt still showed a provoking tenacity of life, but so little able was the Czar to conceal his impatience at this perversity, that writing from St. Petersburg (21st February, 1853) to Lord John Russell, Sir Hamilton Seymour states his conviction, that he 'must have settled in his own mind that the hour, if not *of* Turkey's dissolution, at all events *for* its dissolution, must be at hand.' To whom, then, in this crisis, could she look for aid? To Austria, or to Prussia? These Powers the Emperor regarded as virtually at his own disposal.[5] To France? Her he was prepared to defy, if she stood alone, and if she were inclined to resistance, he might hope to tempt her into inaction by supporting her claims elsewhere. England was certainly formidable; but without the aid of France—from which, under its new dynasty the Czar mistakenly supposed that she had become estranged—even she might be encountered; especially if a march could be stolen on her vigilance, and the Russian forces should gain a firm hold upon Turkish soil before she was in a position to move. Sincere herself in disclaiming any purpose of selfish aggrandisement, she might be quieted by the Czar's assurances, 'as a friend, a gentleman,' that Russia was actuated by the same purpose, while the forces were being advanced to the Turkish frontier. In this way a blow might be struck so sudden and so deadly, as to turn the scale in the favour of Russia in any resistance to her advance upon Constantinople which might afterwards be attempted by England. Add to these considerations the effect of being told that England's fighting days were over; and does it not become more than probable, that the Emperor Nicholas would not have been withheld from his aggression upon Turkey by any language, however decided, which the English Cabinet might have used?

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[5] This is clear from his language to Sir Hamilton Seymour:—'I and the English Government having entire confidence in one another's views, *I care nothing about the rest.* When I speak of Russia I speak of Austria as well; what suits the one suits the other; our interests as regards Turkey are perfectly identical.'—*Eastern Papers*, Part V. p. 10. And again (*Ibid.* p. 4):—'*Je désire vous parler en ami et en* gentleman; *si nous arrivons à nous entendre sur cette affaire, l'Angleterre et moi, pour le reste, peu m'importe; il m'est indifférent ce que font ou pensent les autres.*'

And indeed, short of absolute defiance, more decided language could scarcely have been used than that which was held by England. The Emperor was told, early in 1853, that we in no way shared his belief that Turkey was in a dying state; that in any case, if mischief did befall her, the question how her provinces should be dealt with was one, not for Russia and England merely, but for all the Powers of Europe; and that, while having ourselves no wish to hold Constantinople, we should not submit to its being held by Russia. If in the face of these intimations the Emperor persevered in his measures for invading Turkey, he must have been prepared at all hazards to encounter any resistance from us which such a step might provoke. That this perseverance must provoke such resistance was obvious from the moment that the four

Great Powers supported Turkey in her modifications of the Vienna Note. Only by adopting their proposals, could Russia have averted a war. But this she refused to do, and so brought matters to a point, as expressed by the Prince (*ante*, vol. ii. 517), where, 'only with the most dishonourable cowardice on the part of the Powers, could the demands be conceded by them which are now set up.'

If the politic wisdom, which had compassed the stealthy encroachments of Russia for the last 150 years, had still prevailed, the Emperor would surely have sought the means at this point of retreating from the position he had taken—a position which he was told by the united voice of Europe was untenable. But he did not do so. Many—and Lord Aberdeen among the number—found it hard to believe that the Sovereign, who throughout a long reign had been the foremost to uphold the obligations of treaties, would endanger the peace of Europe by seeking to disturb the territorial status, and at that very point where of all others any disturbance was sure to occasion an European convulsion.[6] The arbitrament of war, moreover, was too serious to be lightly courted; and although by this time a strong feeling of sympathy for Turkey had been aroused, it is impossible to look back upon the history of this period of excitement without coming to the conclusion, that the Government did well to repress rather than stimulate any action which might have precipitated a recourse to arms. Russia was believed to be well prepared for war. Turkey was not; neither were we.

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[6] It was, as might have been expected, very early foreseen that, when it was found war could not be avoided, people would be ready to say, that it might have been avoided if the Emperor Nicholas had been told in blunt language that England would fight if he did not withdraw his claims. In writing (20th December, 1853) to Lord Clarendon the Queen says:—'Lord Palmerston's mode of proceeding always had that advantage, that it threatened steps which it was hoped would not become necessary, whilst those hitherto taken started on the principle of not needlessly offending Russia by threats, obliging us at the same time to take the very steps which we refused to threaten.'

France was equally unprepared. Austria and Prussia hung back, but if they could be induced to concur in active measures with the Western Powers, it was manifestly impossible for Russia, even at the eleventh hour, to do otherwise than recede. The Cabinet, when they joined with France in sending their fleets to the support of Turkey, could not but know that this was war, whatever gloss might be put upon the proceeding.[7] If they hoped that a movement so serious might make the Emperor pause in his determination, they must have done so in the face of all experience of his passionate and imperious nature; and by adopting it without at the same time declaring war, they seemed to have drifted into the war which they professed themselves anxious to avoid. But if they did so drift, it was not as a vessel drifts before wind and tide, without a steersman at the helm; but rather as every Ministry may be said to drift, where after long forbearance a war is forced upon them by the obstinacy of an antagonist deaf to reason and remonstrance. It was natural, perhaps, that the action of the Government should seem wavering and uncertain to those who could not measure the difficulties of their position, or the importance of the negotiations which were then pending with the other Powers. But any misconstruction of this kind was of little moment, so long as the Ministry had the satisfaction of knowing, that they had not embroiled their country in war, until every effort at conciliation had been made, and the utmost limits of forbearance had been reached.

It was, no doubt, unfortunate for them that a belief should have become widely spread,—a belief traceable to their own ranks,—that a section of the Cabinet thought that a warlike policy had not been pressed with sufficient determination. At no time can the encouragement given by such rumours of internal dissension to the attacks of the Opposition be otherwise than damaging to a Ministry, and their evil influence was felt long after the whole energies of the Cabinet were devoted to the prosecution of the war with the utmost vigour, and indeed so long as Lord Aberdeen remained at the head of affairs. Many things were, therefore, said at the opening of the Session, which were shown to be both harsh and unjust, as soon as the Ministry were able to make public the details of the negotiations of the previous year. When these became known, the feeling of distrust gave way to one of confidence. In an animated debate on the 20th of February, Lord Palmerston, in a speech in his best manner, triumphantly vindicated the Ministry from the charge which had been pressed against them by Mr. Disraeli, of credulity in attaching credit to the representations of the Russian Government:—

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[7] In returning to Lord Clarendon (20th December, 1853) the Draft Despatch to Lord Cowley, which authorised the joint action of the Allied fleets in the Black Sea for confining Russian ships of war to Sebastopol, Her Majesty wrote: 'The concluding sentence' [of the Despatch] 'the Queen must consider as tantamount to a Declaration of War, which, however, under the guarded conditions attached to it, she feels she cannot refuse to sanction.'

> 'It is said, that we heard of military preparations on the part of Russia, and we ought to have inferred from this that some other demands were on foot. We were told by the Russian Government itself that such preparations were making, but we were also told by the Russian Government that their sole object was to counteract the menacing language which had been used by France, and that they bore solely and entirely on the question of the Holy Places. We were told also, it is quite true, that Russia required some proof of confidence, as well as some reparation from Turkey, for offences which she had committed in connection with the changes that had been made in the question of the Holy Places, and that the security was to be in the form of a treaty confirming the Sultan's firmans for the settlement of that question. But we had never any intimation that any such treaty was to apply to other matters.'

After taxing the Russian Government with exhausting every modification of untruth, concealment, and evasion, ending with assertions of positive falsehood, Lord Palmerston, who was reputed to be at variance with Lord Aberdeen as to his policy of forbearance, went on to ask whether anything had been lost by that forbearance? Dealing with the assertion that Russia would have given way if we had shown greater vigour at first, he spoke of it as 'a plausible opinion, but, after all, only an opinion,' and 'had Russia, instead of submission, urged us on then to the point at which we now stand, we should have been justly chargeable with a grave political mistake.' He supported this opinion by pointing out, that we should then have alienated the support of Austria and Prussia, which up to this point we had secured, and whose neutrality would in any case be of vital moment. They were not likely to have rushed rashly into a war, which, if Russia should succeed, would involve

> 'Such an appropriation of geographical power on her part, as must be fatal to the independent action of these two countries. . . . . Now they will feel it due to themselves to take some part in the contest, for, if they do not, Austria must have indeed forgotten all her established policy, and must be ignorant of all her own interests; and the same is the case with Prussia. I therefore say,' he continued, 'that with England and France acting as the supporters of Turkey, with the opinion of the whole of Europe opposed to the Emperor of Russia, who will not have a single ally to support him in his career of injustice, I have no doubt as to what must be the result.'

This speech did much towards repairing the mischief done by the reports of division in the Cabinet counsels. In writing to Baron Stockmar a few days afterwards, the Prince speaks of it in this sense:

'The Ministry,' he says, 'has gained in moral strength. The publication of the Blue Book has quite changed the popular feeling as to the conduct of the Eastern affair, and in place of indignation, suspicion, &c., produced a recognition of the dignified bearing of the Government. The debates on the Eastern question have all turned out well for the Ministry, and now that even Palmerston has spoken out in the Commons, the public is satisfied. This again strengthens Aberdeen, whose downfall continues to be the *dearest wish* of the Tories.'

True to what he considered his pledge to the country, Lord John Russell had introduced his Reform Bill on the 13th of February. It had its enemies, however, within the Cabinet itself, and it was generally felt that the time for its introduction was unseasonable. On the 14th of February the Prince had written, 'It is true, *que personne n'en veut*, because people see, hear, and wish for war and war only.' In the letter to Baron Stockmar just quoted, he thus refers to it:—

'Lord John has introduced his Reform Bill, and, although Parliament is now as before most anxious to get quit of the whole question, and all parties, the Whigs included, would fain get Lord John out of the way at once and for ever, yet the measure has met with so much genuine support throughout the country by reason of its fairness, moderation, liberality and comprehensiveness, that Parliament will have to deal warily both with it and its originator. The Radicals decided yesterday at a private meeting on giving their adhesion to it. The Bill is, moreover, a really good one, especially the introduction of the principle of a representation of minorities by way of compensation for the extension of the franchise.'

Then returning to the all-engrossing subject of the hour, the Prince continues:—

'Twelve thousand men will be assembled in Malta within a few days. Lord Raglan receives the command: the two Divisions will be led by George [Duke of] Cambridge and

General Browne. Gordon, who goes out upon the Staff, has left me, and I have appointed in his stead Captain du Plat of the Artillery, son of the Consul General in Warsaw. We are getting ready 15,000 men besides. France, which has hitherto shown no disposition to send a single man, will now send 45,000. The answer of the Emperor of Russia to the French Emperor's published letter, in which 1812 is bluntly pointed at, breaks down the bridge between these two potentates, and makes future coquetting impossible.

'We have exchanged notes with France, by which we mutually put ourselves under condition neither to seek nor reap any territorial advantage nor aggrandisement from the war, and offer Austria and Prussia admission into the alliance upon the same conditions.

'Austria seems to have wakened up at last, and to be anxious to assume her place in our confederacy; if she does, Prussia will come in with her. Manteuffel's behaviour hitherto has been excellent. We have tendered to the Porte a Protective Treaty, which will be signed forthwith.

'We have placed our own commerce and that of France at sea and throughout the world under mutual protection, as a precaution against the worst complications, and we are ready for war. The Baltic Fleet will be the finest that ever went to sea,—twenty-eight sail of the line, to which France will add a complement of fifteen. In Petersburg they seem to have made up their mind to throw down the gauntlet to all Europe. Doubts begin to be entertained as to the Emperor's sanity.

'Our finances are so flourishing, that we expect to carry on the war without borrowing a shilling, doubling the Income Tax in case of need; at the same time, however, we shall not give a shilling of subsidy to any one. The public is as eager for war as ever. In the theatre every allusion to it is received with acclamations.'

It soon became evident that the Prince's fears as to the fate of the Reform Bill were to be realised. Although Lord Palmerston had professed his approval of its leading principles, when he resumed his place in the Ministry after his brief secession in December, it was notorious that neither Lord Lansdowne nor himself approved of the measure, nor of the time chosen for bringing it forward. The knowledge of this circumstance emboldened the Opposition in their determination to prevent any change in the representation. Many even of the ordinary supporters of the Ministry remonstrated against stirring further with the measure, and an independent member, Sir E. Dering, gave notice of his intention to move an amendment, on the second reading, that it was inexpedient to discuss it in the present state of our foreign relations. On the 3rd of March the second reading was adjourned to the 16th of April. But there was every reason to apprehend a serious defeat if this were pressed, and on the 11th of that month Lord John Russell was compelled to announce the withdrawal of the measure for the Session. His emotion in doing so indicated very plainly, that he was constrained to this step, as much by the coldness of friends, as by the pressure of the ostensibly more urgent business by which he professed to have been moved to sacrifice his cherished scheme.

But in truth the country was in no mood to consider any question, either of contraction or redistribution of the franchise. Its whole thoughts were concentrated on the war, which, in the Queen's words in writing to King Leopold (14th February), 'was popular beyond belief.' The enthusiasm continued to rise with the preparations, which were now actively on foot, for a conflict, in which the country was impatient to engage. The Czar's reply to the Emperor of the French had dispelled the last hope that he would abate one jot of his pretensions; and, if anything had been wanting to animate the popular feeling, the manifesto which he issued on the 23rd of February would have been more than sufficient for the purpose. 'England and France,' it ran, 'have sided with the enemies of Christianity against Russia combating for the Orthodox faith. But Russia will not betray her holy mission, and if enemies encroach upon her frontiers, we are ready to meet them with the firmness bequeathed to us by our forefathers.' This language imported a fiercer rancour into a strife already sufficiently embittered, by declaring that to be a war of creeds which the Western nations could only recognise as the offspring of a reckless ambition.

The Russian Ambassador had quitted London on the 7th of February, and the same day our Ambassador at St. Petersburg was recalled. The formality of declaring war had nevertheless not been gone through. The time, however, for doing this had now come. Towards the end of February the Austrian Prime Minister had let it be known, that if France and England would fix a day for the evacuation of the Principalities by Russia, after which, if the notice were disregarded, hostilities would commence, Austria would support the summons. No time was lost in acting upon this announcement, and on the 27th of February simultaneous notes to this effect were despatched to St. Petersburg from London and from Paris. The bearer of these despatches was to wait six days for a reply, and the 30th of April was named as the day for the evacuation of the Principalities. To these notes, which were delivered to the Emperor on the 14th of March, he intimated to the representatives of England and France, through his Chancellor, that he did not think it fitting (*convenable*) that he should make any reply. This decision reached London by the 24th. On the 27th the Emperor of the French addressed a message to the *Corps Législatif*, announcing that Russia, having refused to reply to the summons of France and England, was thereby placed, with regard to France, in a state of war, the whole responsibility of which rested upon Russia. The same day a message from the Queen to the House of Lords announced the failure of the negotiations with Russia, in which, in concert with her allies, Her Majesty had been for some time engaged, and on the following day a formal Declaration of War was issued. This document, after narrating the progress of the Eastern Question with admirable succinctness, concluded thus:—

'In this conjuncture, Her Majesty feels called upon, by regard for an ally, the integrity and independence of whose empire have been recognised as essential to the peace of Europe, by the sympathies of her people with right against wrong, by a desire to avert from her dominions most injurious consequences, and to save Europe from the preponderance of a Power, which has violated the faith of treaties and defies the opinion of the civilised world, to take up arms, in conjunction with the Emperor of the French, for the defence of the Sultan. Her Majesty is persuaded that in so acting she will have the support of her people; and that the pretext of zeal for the Christian religion will be used in vain to cover an aggression undertaken in disregard of its holy precepts and of its pure and beneficent spirit.'

Meanwhile a considerable portion of the troops destined for action in the East had sailed. No nobler body of men ever wore the British uniform than the regiments which passed through London in these days, high in heart and hope, and in the flower of manly vigour, amid the cheers of surging and enthusiastic crowds. Of one detachment so starting to scenes of privation and trial, then little dreamed of by these crowds or by themselves, a glimpse is furnished in a few graphic touches in a letter by the Queen to King Leopold on the 28th of February:—

'The last battalion of the Guards (Scottish Fusiliers) embarked to-day. They passed through the court-yard here at seven o'clock this morning. We stood on the balcony to see them. The morning fine, the sun shining over the towers of Westminster Abbey, and an immense crowd collected to see the fine men, and cheering them immensely as with difficulty they marched along. They formed line, presented arms, and then cheered us very heartily, and went off cheering. It was a touching and beautiful sight. Many sorrowing friends were there, and one saw the shake of many a hand. My best wishes and prayers will be with them all.'

A few days after this (10th of March, 1854), the Queen and Prince left London for Osborne, in order that they might visit the magnificent fleet which had been assembled at Spithead under the command of Sir Charles Napier. On the eve of their departure Her Majesty writes to Lord Aberdeen :—

'We are just starting to see the fleet, which is to sail at once for its important destination. It will be a solemn moment! Many a heart will be very heavy, and many a prayer, including our own, will be offered up for its safety and glory!'

CHAPTER LIII.

THE fame of the stately fleet which was assembled at Spithead had drawn thousands to Portsmouth from every part of the country, and the appearance it presented answered the high expectations which had been raised. Twenty iron ships, all moved by steam, composed the squadron. Of these the *Duke of Wellington*, of 131 guns, and the *Royal George*, of 120 guns, were three-deckers, six more were line-of-battle ships, and the remaining twelve were all of great tonnage, and armed with artillery of the most formidable weight. The weather which awaited the Queen on her arrival from London was too bad to admit of any deliberate inspection of the fleet on her way to Osborne, and prevented Her Majesty from visiting the Admiral's ship, the *St. Jean d'Acre*, as she had intended. But although the bad weather somewhat marred what would otherwise have been a spectacle of unusual beauty and interest, it could not deprive those who were at this moment uppermost in Her Majesty's thoughts of the encouragement of her presence. Leaving Portsmouth amid the thunders of a salute from the vessels there, including the old *Victory*, the little Royal yacht, the *Fairy*, made its way through the squadron, amid the cheers of the men, by whom the yards were manned, and the roar of the guns, and then bore away for Osborne.

Next day (11th March) the Queen and Prince returned in the *Fairy* to Spithead to witness the departure of the first Division of the squadron for the Baltic. Taking her place at the head of the squadron, the *Fairy* led the way for several miles, and then stopped while the fleet defiled past the Royal yacht, saluting as it went. As the majestic procession went by,—the Admiral bringing up the rear in the *Duke of Wellington*,—*The Times* chronicler reports, 'Her Majesty stood waving her handkerchief towards the mighty ship as she departed, and for a long time after the whole fleet had gone the Royal yacht remained motionless, as if the illustrious occupants desired to linger over a spectacle calculated to impress them so profoundly.' What was in the Queen's heart at the time we may infer from a few words in a letter of this period to Baron Stockmar: 'I am very enthusiastic about my dear army and navy, and wish I had two sons in both *now*. I know I shall suffer much when I hear of losses among them.' On the 15th, when the second Division of the squadron sailed, the Queen and Prince returned to Spithead to give them a parting greeting.

On the 11th March the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar:—

'I write to you to-day from Osborne, to which we came yesterday, in order to see at noon to-day the fleet put to sea which has been mustered at Spithead, and is to go to the Baltic under Sir Charles Napier. It is wonderfully fine, consisting almost exclusively of screw ships, and carries 2,000 guns and 21,000 men. The French have not yet been able to get a single ship ready to start, but they promise great things. We can wait no longer, for the ice in the Baltic is beginning to break up.'

Admiral Sir Charles Napier felt that too much had been spoken and written as to what his fleet might be relied on to effect; and, in replying to an address from the corporation of Portsmouth just before starting, he had done his best to moderate the expectations which had been raised, and which the event proved to be greatly exaggerated. Some days before (7th March) a dinner, presided over by Lord Palmerston, and attended by Sir James Graham, First Lord of the Admiralty, and by Sir William Molesworth, the First Commissioner of Works, had been given to him at the Reform Club. A more prudent man would not have allowed himself to be put in a position where modesty in speech was sure to be construed into lack of spirit, and yet where confident assertion must have that air of bravado which a brave man most abhors. Sir Charles Napier was not the man to steer between a Scylla and Charybdis of this kind. But his speech upon the occasion created less dissatisfaction than those of the more practised orators, who made him the object of their encomium. It was a new feature in English political life, that members of the Cabinet should take an active part in a public dinner to an Admiral on the eve of his assuming a command at the outset of a great war. There was no need to fan the war spirit of the country, for it was already at fever pitch; and it was generally felt that it would have been time enough to speak of English prowess and the great qualities of a naval leader, after victory, and not before it. The tone of the speeches of both Lord Palmerston and Sir James Graham was resented as flippant and unbecoming by those whose hearts went entirely with the war, scarcely less than by those who most strongly condemned it. 'I have read,' said Mr. Bright, a few nights afterwards in the House of Commons, 'the proceedings of that banquet with pain and humiliation. The reckless levity displayed is, in my opinion, discreditable to the grave and responsible statesmen of a civilised and Christian nation.' Losing his wonted self-control, Lord Palmerston adopted a tone of contemptuous indignation in his reply, but the House was not in a temper to submit to an exhibition of the same levity towards themselves, and he was made to feel that his influence, great as it was, could not reconcile them to the grave mistake which he had committed.

By this time it had become clear that Russian influence at the Court of Berlin was actively at work to undo the European concert which had hitherto been maintained. The Prussian envoy at the Conference of Vienna had, as we have seen, joined in the declaration that the recent proposals of the Czar were inadmissible. But no sooner had this step been taken than the King of Prussia became alarmed at the act of his own Government. His dread of what the Czar might do in the way of attack on Prussia was known to verge on absolute pusillanimity, and the alternative now presented to his choice was, either to follow the other Great Powers into enforcing by arms their declaration that the demands of Russia were incompatible with the faith of treaties and the peace of Europe, or to take up a position of neutrality, on the ground that the interests of Prussia were not involved in the quarrel.

In the letter to Baron Stockmar just quoted the Prince says on this subject :—

'The European complication is becoming, through the conduct of the King of Prussia, most perilous for Germany. He has within the last fortnight taken a decided turn in favour of Russia, and Bunsen has fallen into extreme discredit here. After he had depicted in the most glowing colours Prussia's readiness to stand by the Western Powers, and urged us *de pousser la pointe*, and to force his Ministry into further declarations, telling us they needed and desired such a stimulus, he has, since his master's change of front, become suddenly very violent with Lord Clarendon—"Prussia could not allow herself to be bullied," &c. &c. &c.

'The irritation here against the Prussian Court is very great, and not undeserved. After it had caused intimation to be made of its dread of France, and we had procured a declaration for them that no territorial aggrandisement of any kind would be accepted by that nation, they now affect a fear of Russia, as though Prussia must be swallowed up in a moment. This to a certain extent paralyses Austria, and once the war begins, which it will do in a fortnight, and Europe is found to act in concert no longer, the King's character must inevitably be damaged, and a revolutionary war ensue.

'Reform is meanwhile postponed till Easter, and I do not see a chance for its being taken up again.'

The King of Prussia seems to have thought that something could be done by taking the Eastern Question into his own hands, and making a direct personal appeal to the English Sovereign. It is difficult to see by what process he could have brought himself to think, that such a step could be of any avail, unless, indeed, it were that, in his conceptions of a constitutional monarchy, the will of the Sovereign was omnipotent, and could reverse the decisions of the Ministry. However this may be, scarcely had the decision negative of the Czar's proposals been come to at Vienna, when he despatched a cavalry officer, General von der Gröben, with two letters to our Queen, one official and the other private. Both letters could of course only be dealt with by Her Majesty as public documents addressed to her advisers as well as to herself. Their only practical object was to urge the Queen to consider anew the Russian proposal, which had been rejected at Vienna, 'in a spirit of conciliation and a love of peace.' If only she would do this, the King wrote, he would not abandon the hope that a good understanding would yet be come to between Great Britain, France, and Russia. As the official letter was confined to this suggestion, the answer was short and decided: 'Although anxious,' it bore, 'to co-operate with Your Majesty in every effort for the preservation of peace, I deeply lament to say that I cannot venture to entertain a hope that war will now be averted; but I feel confidence that its sphere may be restricted, and the duration of that great calamity may be shortened by the Four Powers continuing to be firmly united in their policy and course of action.'

The King's other letter, which was long and eloquent as usual, demanded a more elaborate reply. 'I am informed,' he wrote, 'that the Russian Emperor has sent proposals for preliminaries of peace to Vienna, and that these have been pronounced by the Conference of Ambassadors not to be in accordance with their programme. Just there, where the vocation of diplomacy ceases, does the special province of the Sovereign begin. The moment is big with a most momentous decision. The destinies of a quarter of the globe hang upon a cast of the die. If God be not merciful to Europe, we are face to face with a war of which the end cannot be foreseen.' Then recalling the enormous losses of human life in the war of 1813–14–15—'a war commensurate, however, with the horrors of the sacrifice,'—the King asks, if the impending war is 'worth the much greater sacrifice which it will demand, looking to the inexhaustible resources and the unshakeable resolution of Russia and the Allied Powers.'

'Is it not most strange,' the letter continues, 'that England seems for some time past to have been ashamed of what has been the special motive cause of the impending conflagration? Who now speaks of the Turk? On the contrary, the war will now be in the highest sense of the word a war for an idea (*ein Tendenzkrieg*).[1] The preponderance of Russia is to be broken down! Well! I, her neighbour, have never felt this preponderance, and have never yielded to it. And England, in truth, has felt it less than I. The equilibrium of Europe will be menaced by this war, for the world's greatest Powers will be weakened by it. But, above all, suffer me to ask, "Does God's law justify a war for an idea?"' This last consideration it is that leads the writer to implore Her Majesty, 'for the sake of the Prince of Peace, not to reject the Russian proposals. . . . *Order them to be probed to the bottom, and see that this is done in a desire for peace. Cause what may be accepted to be winnowed from what appears objectionable*, and *set negotiations on foot upon this basis!* I know that the Russian Emperor is ardently desirous of peace. Let Your Majesty build a bridge for the principle of his life—the Imperial honour! He will walk over it, extolling God and praising Him. For this I pledge myself.

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[1] It is difficult to find in English a full equivalent for this word. The meaning seems to be a war directed to a remote ulterior purpose as contrasted with a war for an immediate and tangible object, such as a war of defence or of reprisals.

'In conclusion, will Your Majesty allow me to say one word for Prussia and for myself? *I am resolved to maintain a position of complete neutrality;* and to this I add, with proud elation, *My people and myself are of one mind.* They *require* absolute neutrality from me. They say (and I say), "What have we to do with the Turk?" Whether he stand or fall in no way concerns the industrious Rhinelanders and the husbandmen of the Riesengebirg and Bernstein. Grant that the Russian tax-gatherers are an odious race, and that of late monstrous falsehoods have been told and outrages perpetrated in the Imperial name. It was the Turk, and not we who suffered, and the Turk has plenty of good friends, but the Emperor is a noble gentleman, and has done us no harm. Your Majesty will allow that this North German sound practical sense is difficult to gainsay. . . . Should Count Gröben come too late, should war have been declared, still I do not abandon hope. Many a war has been declared, and yet not come to actual blows. God the Lord's Will decides.'

To rebuke, without violating the forms of courtesy, the amiable but most mischievous weakness which pervades this letter, and to make appeal to a sentiment higher than the short-sighted and selfish policy which it announced, was no easy task. But the firm hand and admirable tact which never failed the Sovereign was equal to the task. Her Majesty's reply was in German, and the earnest conviction under which it was written is visible in the firm and fluent characters of the draft of it, in the Prince's autograph, which lies before us, without a word of erasure or interlineation, as we translate:—

'Osborne, 17th March, 1854.

'Dear Brother,—General Graf von Gröben has handed to me the official as well as private letter of Your Majesty, and I send your friendly messenger back to you with answers to both. He will be able to tell you by word of mouth, what I can only do imperfectly in writing, how deep is my regret, that after we have gone hand in hand loyally until now, you should separate from us at this critical moment. My regret is all the greater by reason of my inability even to comprehend the reasons which induce Your Majesty to take this step.

'The recent Russian proposals came as an answer to the very last attempt at a compromise which the Powers considered they could make with honour, and they have been rejected by the Vienna Conference, not because they were merely at variance with the language of the programme, but because they were directly contrary to its meaning. Your Majesty's envoy has taken part in this Conference and its decision, and when Your Majesty says, "where the vocation of diplomacy ends, there that of the Sovereign may with propriety begin," I cannot concur in any such line of demarcation, for what my ambassador does, he does in my name, and consequently I feel myself not only bound in honour, but also constrained by an imperative obligation to accept the consequences, whatever they may be, of the line which he has been directed to adopt.

'The consequences of a war, frightful and incalculable as they are, are as distressing to me to contemplate as they are to Your Majesty. I am also aware that the Emperor of Russia does not wish for war. But he makes demands upon the Porte, which the united European Powers, yourself included, have solemnly declared to be incompatible with the independence of the Porte and the equilibrium of Europe. In view of this declaration, and of the presence of the Russian army of invasion in the Principalities, the Powers must be prepared to support their words by acts. If the Turk now retires into the background, and the impending war appears to you to be a "war for an idea," the reason is simply this, that the very motives which urge on the Emperor, in spite of the protest of all Europe, and at the risk of a war that may devastate the world, to persist in his demands, disclose a determination to realise a fixed idea, and that the grand ulterior consequences of the war must be regarded as far more important than its original ostensible cause, which in the beginning appeared to be neither more nor less than the key of the back door of a mosque.

'Your Majesty calls upon me "to probe the question to the bottom in the spirit and love of peace, and to build a bridge for the Imperial honour." . . . . All the devices and ingenuity of diplomacy and also of good will have been squandered during the last nine months in vain attempts to build up such a bridge! *Projets de Notes*, Conventions, Protocols, &c. &c., by the dozen have emanated from the *Chancelleries* of the different Powers, and the ink that has gone to the penning of them might well be called a second Black Sea. But every one of them has been wrecked upon the self-will of your Imperial brother-in-law.

'When Your Majesty tells me "that you are now determined to assume an attitude of complete neutrality," and that in this mind you appeal to your people, who exclaim with sound practical sense, "It is to the Turk that violence has been done; the Turk has plenty of good friends, and the Emperor has done us no harm,"—I do not understand you. Had such language fallen from the King of Hanover or of Saxony, I could have understood it. But up to the present hour I have regarded Prussia as one of the five Great Powers, which since the Peace of 1815 have been the guarantors of treaties, the guardians of civilisation, the champions of right, and ultimate arbitrators of the nations; and I have for my part felt the holy duty to which they were thus divinely called, being at the same time perfectly alive to the obligations, serious as these are and fraught with danger, which it imposes. Renounce these obligations, my dear brother, and in doing so you renounce for Prussia the *status* she has hitherto held. And if the example thus set should find imitators, European civilisation is abandoned as a plaything for the winds; right will no longer find a champion, nor the oppressed an umpire to appeal to.

'Let not Your Majesty think that my object in what I have said is to persuade you to change your determination; it is a genuine outpouring from the heart of a sister who is devoted to you, who could not forgive herself if, at such an eventful moment, she did not lay bare her inmost soul to you. So little have I it in my purpose to seek to persuade you, that nothing has pained me more than the suspicion expressed through General von der Gröben in your name, that it was the wish of England to lead you into temptation by holding out the prospect of certain advantages. The groundlessness of such an assumption is apparent from the very terms of the Treaty, which was offered to you, the most important clause of which was that by which the contracting parties pledged themselves, *under no circumstances, to seek to obtain from the war any advantage to themselves.* Your Majesty could not possibly have given any stronger proof of your unselfishness than by your signature to this treaty.

'But now to conclude! You think that war might even be declared, yet you express the hope that for all that it might still not break out. I cannot, unfortunately, give countenance to the hope that the declaration will not be followed by immediate action. . Shakspeare's words—

> Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
> Bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee—

have sunk deeply into every Englishman's heart. Sad that they should find their application here, where, in other circumstances, personal friendship and liking would alone prevail! What must be Your Majesty's state of mind at seeing them directed against a beloved brother-in-law, whom yet, much as you love him, your conscience cannot acquit of the crime of having, by his arbitrary and passionate bearing, brought such vast misery upon the world!

'May the Almighty have you in His keeping!

'With Albert's warmest remembrances and our united greetings to the dear Queen, I remain,

'My dear Brother,
'Your Majesty's faithful sister and friend,
'VICTORIA R.'

In returning the draft of this letter to the Prince (18th of March) Lord Clarendon said, that he 'had read it with sincere pleasure and admiration. It is probably the first time that a faithful picture of his conduct and position has been presented to the King. I have sent a translation to Lord Aberdeen.'

A few days afterwards the Prince reported his views of the political position in the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'During the time I have not written, a period of scarcely a fortnight, the political world has again undergone a marked revolution. The symptoms which we had noted in Berlin were speedily followed by a complete right-about-face in the Prussian policy. The indignation here on the subject of the inconstancy, the unreliableness, and the folly (*Unverstand*) of the King is very great. Even Bunsen has been acting foolishly, first laying before the King a grand scheme for the partition of Russia to the advantage of Prussia, and then, when he found that this had fallen into the hands of his master's Russian camarilla, and had roused the King's own indignation, making a scene with Lord Clarendon, in which he started, without any justification, the theme, "Prussia will not be bullied," and, in order to set himself right again at home, telegraphing that Lord Clarendon had answered him in very violent language (which was true). Now, however, the King has referred the violence to the scheme of partition, called himself disgraced, &c. It was necessary Bunsen should have a diplomatic indisposition for some months. He replied that he would not be indisposed. Then Von der Gröben was sent to explain the King's policy! No pleasant task either! But the choice for the purpose was good, for it fell upon a man, who knew absolutely nothing of the policy, who was no witch and no diplomatist, and had not read a single official document on the Eastern Question, and who was only allowed six hours *pour faire ses malles*, after receiving the announcement of his mission. And this was the man charged with the duty of convincing England, that the intentions of the Emperor of Russia were excellent, and that we ought not to make war upon the poor man! The King wished to preserve complete neutrality, for he was furious that it should have been thought he was open to be bribed. Prussia and Germany have absolutely no interest in the Eastern Question, except the wish to see Christianity established!! The answers you may imagine.

'I have read Gustav Diezel's *brochure* with extreme interest,[2] and arranged for its translation into English. It is admirably written. When one is standing in the treadmill of action, the product of the calm consecutive thought of a German highly cultivated philosophical head is a great refreshment. You can form no conception of the fatigue which just at this moment this treadmill causes me, and of the refreshment which a quarter of an hour's conversation with you now and then would be to me.

'Even yet Aberdeen cannot rise to the level of the situation (*Aberdeen kann sich noch nicht in die Höhe schwingen*); the war is in his eyes "like a civil war, like a war between England and Scotland!" I do not like it myself (*ich mag ihn nicht*), but for all that I cannot conjure up his feeling within myself, perhaps because I was born in 1819, and he was serving in 1813 and 1814 in the headquarters of the Allies.

'If Austria continue true, this feeling will be greatly modified, but Prussia makes it very difficult for it to do so.

'The Baltic Fleet is superb; on the other hand, the speeches at the Napier dinner at the Reform Club, where Palmerston presided, were scandalous and vulgar.

'The publication of Hamilton Seymour's *Conversations*

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[2] *Russland, Deutschland, und die Oestliche Frage, von Gustav Diezel.* Stuttgart, 1853. The Prince does not seem to have carried out his intention to have this very able pamphlet translated. It would have been of great use towards making the complications of the Eastern Question well understood, and would have been probably more useful in 1876 than in 1853.

with the Emperor of All the Russias, which the *Journal de Pétersbourg* has forced upon us, will no doubt produce a great sensation on the Continent. The Emperor's dishonesty could not portray itself in more glaring colours,[3] nor his disparaging estimate of the German Powers.

'Buckingham Palace, 23rd March, 1854.'

The celebrated 'Conversations' here mentioned by the Prince might long have been confined to the official archives, but for the article in the *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg* on the 2nd of March, which obviously emanated from the Imperial Chancery. It professed to be an answer to the imputation of bad faith on the part of the Russian Government, which had been made by Lord John Russell, in a speech in Parliament on the 17th of February. To this charge the confidential communications between the Governments were appealed to as giving an absolute negative. So challenged, the Government was absolved from the well-understood rule which bound them to confine the knowledge of such confidential communications to the Cabinet itself. They could have desired nothing better than to have their hands set free, for the documents, while they proved, in Lord Clarendon's words,[4] that our Ministry had been 'honest to the Sultan, honest to our Allies, honest to the Emperor himself,' furnished a conclusive answer to the vehement assertions of their opponents, that they had wavered in their policy, and had allowed themselves to be hoodwinked by the devices of Russian diplomacy. If they had been backward in recognising all the dangers of the situation, it was now seen, that this was due solely to the assurances, of the most positive character, given by the Emperor himself, that he would take no decisive step in regard to Turkey of which England should not previously have been apprised. In the Imperial Memorandum, which closed the series of documents referred to, the Emperor professed his ready concurrence in the English view, 'that the best means of upholding the duration of the Turkish Government was not to harass it by overbearing demands, supported in a manner humiliating to its independence and dignity.' The Memorandum was dated the 15th of April, 1853; but at the very moment when the Emperor was holding this language to our representative at St. Petersburg, Prince Menschikoff was trying by threats at Constantinople to extort from the Porte a secret treaty, which Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, in transmitting a copy of it to our Foreign Office, aptly described, as having for its object 'to reinstate Russian influence in Turkey on an exclusive basis, and in a commanding and stringent form.'

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[3] What would the world have thought, could it have known that before feeling the pulse of the English Ambassador as to the dismemberment of Turkey, the Emperor had made similar overtures to Austria, and with equal want of success? Our Government was not aware of this till long afterwards.

[4] In his speech (31st March) on moving the Address in answer to the Queen's message, announcing the cessation of friendly relations with Russia.

Read by the light of what had since occurred, there seemed to be no doubt, that the plans for disposing of 'the dying man's' inheritance were rapidly maturing, at the very time that our Government were being amused with a show of absolute confidence. An immense body of men had been moved up towards the Principalities in the beginning of 1853, with a view, it was given out, to support Turkey in the event of any attempt by France at coercion, and this very force was now occupying them as a 'material guarantee' for the fulfilment of Russia's demands. The idea of Constantinople passing into the hands of Russia was plainly seen to have taken possession of the Emperor's mind. He professed his readiness to pledge himself not to establish himself there 'as proprietor, of course; but as trustee (*dépositaire*),—that he would not say.'

This was a fine distinction, which might very readily be forgotten, should any question of dislodgment arise, especially as the Emperor, with marked emphasis, had declared that it 'should never be held by the English or French, or any other great nation.' By whom, then? For he was equally resolved that a Byzantine empire should not be reconstructed; nor Greece 'extended so as to render her a powerful State;' nor Turkey broken up into 'little republics, asylums for the Kossuths and Mazzinis and other revolutionists of Europe.' In the same breath he spoke of the Principalities as being 'in fact an independent State under his protection,' and that Servia and Bulgaria might be placed in the same position. Carried further in these revelations of a well-considered purpose than he may at first have intended, the Emperor had, in the same interview, hinted at propitiating England, by an intimation that if, 'in the event of a distribution of the Ottoman succession upon the fall of the empire,' we should seize Egypt and Candia, he would 'have no objections to offer.'

To such suggestions it was only to be expected that the English Government could lend no countenance, and if they discussed them, as Lord Clarendon remarked in the speech already referred to, it was because they wished to avert the danger of the dismemberment of Turkey, and to bring the Emperor to their own view, that Turkey would do very well, if left to herself, and helped and stimulated towards needful reforms. 'We fully discussed his arguments; we gave our reasons for thinking the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was not at hand; we declared that we would not be a party to any underhand dealings, and that we would have no secrets from our allies; we dismissed with something like silent contempt the offer of a territorial bribe, and we pointed out to the Emperor the course that he ought to pursue.'

The deep impression produced by the publication of these papers was not confined to England, but was felt throughout the Continent. They showed to Austria, to Prussia, and to

France, how loyally we had refused to separate their interests from our own, and they could better appreciate this loyalty, knowing as they did how vigorously Russia had been intriguing at their various Courts for many months to detach them from the English alliance.[5] The publication was indeed most opportune in cementing the union with France; and it was not without its effect upon the future action of Austria and Prussia. Austria saw with indignation that her submission to the designs of Russia was taken for granted, and Prussia, that she was not even thought worthy of mention by the Emperor in reference to what was in fact the most important of all European questions. Austria showed her sense of danger by at once placing her army on a war footing, and preparing to move up large reinforcements to the frontier. Prussia, we have seen, had declared herself neutral, but if Austria threw herself into the struggle along with the

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[5] On the 24th of March, Lord Howard de Walden writes to Lord Clarendon from Brussels: 'The French could hardly believe their eyes when they saw such evidence of our honesty and loyalty towards France, and I hear that the remark very generally made was, "that there was an end of *la perfide Albion*," that no one could again use that hackneyed and ill-merited definition of England. Here the impression is astonishment at the folly of Russia in provoking the publication. This is natural, from their Russian bias.'

The French Government had some reason to be surprised at the revelations of Russian tactics, and they lost no time in making their representatives throughout Europe aware, that, from the moment Russia saw that England would not fall in with her views, she had tried to sow discord between England and France. Prince Gortschakoff had, in November 1853, proposed to Count Béarn, the French Minister at Stuttgart, a solution of the Eastern Question by means of an understanding between Russia and France. In the course of what passed Prince Gortschakoff had declared, that he knew England would throw over the Eastern Question as soon as she had got France fairly committed. '*Elle vous aura tout simplement aidés à vous compromettre, et vous laissera tous les embarras d'une position fausse et difficile. Nous avons tous à nous plaindre de cette Puissance. Quel bon tour à lui jouer que de nous arranger sans elle? Croyez-moi! Méfiez-vous de la perfide Albion!*' This language, and much more to the same effect, Prince Gortschakoff stated that he was officially authorised to hold. 'I need not say,' M. Drouyn de Lhuys writes in the Circular Note, from which our quotations are made, 'that our loyalty towards England and towards Europe forbade us to lend an ear to these insinuations.'

Western Powers, it seemed impossible that Prussia should long continue to hold aloof, without danger to her own position in Germany.

While, however, Prussia refused to make common cause with the other Powers, the position of Austria was a difficult one. Writing to the Prince on the 26th of March, Lord Clarendon says:—

'The position of Austria is very embarrassing, and she may certainly have to encounter Russian dangers and German difficulties, if she takes an active part with England and France, and Prussia is unfettered by any engagement, and free to attack her, or intrigue against her. I expect, therefore, that she will hesitate to sign either the Convention or the Protocol, and it seems a matter of doubtful policy whether she should be urged to do so, which is the course to which the French Government are inclined. I should be grateful, if your Royal Highness would favour me with your opinion upon this important point.'

To this letter the Prince replied, next day:—'I don't think that Austria has anything to fear from Prussia or Germany if she were to take an active part in the war together with us. The peculiarities of the Prussian Government and Court are strong in destroying and impeding a bold and consistent policy, but not for originating and following one—*vide* 1848–1854. The King *personally* will never injure Austria if he can help it, and the patriotic liberal party is powerless if Austria goes with the West, and the national feeling in Germany and Prussia hangs back in favour of Russia. The small German Courts may dislike seeing Austria engaged against Russia, but chiefly so from a fear of being abandoned to the mercy of Prussia. I can accordingly see no element which could make Prussia dangerous to Austria in the supposed contingency.' The Prince then directs Lord Clarendon's attention to the existence of a secret treaty between Austria and Prussia, dated the 3rd of May, 1851, which, although he had never seen it, he had always considered to be 'the key to the relative positions of Austria and Prussia.' The treaty was understood to be on the point of expiring. 'Should it be renewed Prussia would be bound to defend Austria, if attacked or endangered in any of her *non-German* dominions. . . . Lord Westmoreland' [our Ambassador at Vienna] 'ought to ascertain the real facts about this treaty, and until these are obtained, we should, in my opinion, not attempt to drive Austria into a corner, but merely generally exhort her to back us in a cause which is *her own*, and for which *we* are making real sacrifices.'

On the 29th of January, 1853, the Emperor Nicholas had told Sir Hamilton Seymour that he would 'never permit such an extension of Greece as would render her a powerful State;' but within a few months of that time his agents were busily at work, agitating secretly for a general movement of the Greeks upon the Turkish frontier, and preparing them for a war, which they were led to believe would terminate 'not in a kingdom of Greece, but in the Hellenic Empire of the East.' The familiar pretext of a Christian crusade was put forward in the Greek Government paper, where the Christian Powers were violently denounced 'as alone keeping alive the anti-Christian and monstrous tyranny of Turkey,' which must be made to give way for 'the Hellenic Empire, which was inevitably to replace it under the invincible arms of Russia.'[6] In proportion as the determination of Russia to hold the Principalities became more pronounced, the insurrectionary movement in Greece gained a head. It had the secret sanction of the Court, which was Russian to the core. Regiments were accordingly allowed to be organised, and officers of high rank in the Greek army made a pretence of resigning their commissions, and repaired to the frontier to place themselves at the head of the insurgents. A barbarous and sanguinary warfare raged along the Turkish frontier.

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[6] *Despatch of Mr. Wyse* from Athens, 7th of April, 1853.

During March 1854 a Despatch, dated the 2nd of that month, addressed by Count Nesselrode to the representatives of Russia abroad, and in which the active support of Russia with the movement was promised, was widely circulated in Greece, and for a time kept alive a struggle which had hitherto produced only desolation and havoc alike to Turks and to Greeks. But the Montenegrins, Servians, and Bulgarians, who had been counted on to join in the insurrection, refused to move, while Russia was held at bay upon the Danube by the Turks, and could not fulfil her promises of help. It was felt that the time had come to strike at the source of the evil, and by compelling King Otho to withdraw his secret support from the insurgents, to put an end to the miseries of the wretched populations, who were being sacrificed to an insane ambition. Accordingly the coasts of Greece were put under blockade, and 9,000 French and English troops landed and encamped between Athens and the Piræus. Finally, the Allied Governments addressed an Ultimatum to the Greek Government, calling upon them to observe a strict neutrality towards Turkey; and six hours only were allowed for an answer. The Cabinet immediately resigned; but the signature of the King to the required declaration was accepted as sufficient. A new Cabinet was formed, and the Allied forces remained for some time to support them in their efforts to restore tranquillity. The officers who had joined the insurgents returned to head-quarters, and by degrees the insurrection died completely out.

In the following letter to his old friend at Coburg, the Prince deals with the argument, which was current in some diplomatic circles, that we should have let Russia overthrow the Turkish Empire, and have been content with taking guarantees, that she should not do so to the prejudice of the other European States:—

'I owe you my best thanks for two kind letters. Fischer's letter contains everything that can be said from the point of view of one who desires that neutrality should be maintained, and also certain individual truths, which nevertheless do not comprise *the whole truth*, and especially take no account of the motives by which a nation should be actuated! The extracts transmitted with your letter of the 12th show very clearly what a terrible state things are in in Berlin. This is beginning to be comprehended here, and has evoked a contempt for the King and his Government, which is the worst calamity that can befall a great State. I am much pleased that you like Victoria's letter.[7] There is now no longer any excuse to be made on the ground of ignorance of the truth.

'In regard to the reproaches cast upon England from so many quarters for her narrowness of heart and shortsightedness—that it ought to have been foreseen that the Greeks would rise, that the Turkish supremacy cannot be upheld, and that the fanatic Osmanlis would rather come to terms with Russia than be forced to admit Christians to an equal footing with the Turks—that she should therefore have rather looked calmly on at the overthrow of the Turkish Empire by Russia, with the view of thereupon taking so energetic a part in the European solution of the Hereditary question, that this overthrow could not have resulted to the advantage of Russia, I have merely to reply, that we did foresee all this very distinctly, but that a *popular* Government cannot carry on a policy which has apparent contradictions within itself that are only to be reconciled by time, and one portion of which is to receive its complement from the other at a *distant* stage. The overthrow of Turkey by Russia no English statesman could view with equanimity; public opinion would have flung him to the winds like chaff, and no reliance could be placed on *such* far-seeing, long-calculated, two-sided policy, with changes of Ministry and Parliamentary majorities at home, and more especially with combinations on the Continent, in which no confidence could be placed. We must live from day to day, but while we cleave as we best can to the self-consistent and impregnable principle of *justice*, I feel confident that, whatever phases may present themselves, we shall not upon the whole fail to deal with them wisely. Russia has done Turkey wrong, we must therefore procure redress for her; King Otho and the Greeks have done Turkey wrong, we must therefore oppose him. France is minded to do battle for the right, we are therefore allies with France in war by sea and land; Prussia and Austria have acknowledged the right, on paper at least, and therefore we sit in conference with them, &c. &c.

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[7] The letter to the King of Prussia above quoted, p. 42.

'Here in our home affairs we have had another crisis produced by the difference between Palmerston and Lord John about Reform, which threatened for a time to break up the Ministry. This is now postponed, at least till next Christmas; for which date Palmerston declares he will continue his opposition to that Reform, which he has now for the third time allowed to be promised to Parliament by Lord John in his presence. Lord John is furious; but Palmerston continues to be the popular man, and the only *national and liberal Minister!!* Aberdeen behaves in the same high-minded, courageous, and conciliatory spirit he has always shown, but he has no end of troubles.[8] At home all is well; the children make steady progress.

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[8] On 14th of April, 1854, the Queen writes to Lord Aberdeen: 'We must all feel that we owe the settlement of these alarming difficulties to that great spirit of fairness, justice, and unflinching singleness of purpose, and rare unselfishness, which so eminently distinguish our kind and valued friend Lord Aberdeen.'

'The next party conflict in the House of Commons will be upon Finance. Gladstone wants to pay for the war out of current revenue, so long as he does not require more than ten millions sterling above the ordinary expenditure, and to increase the taxes for the purpose. The Opposition are for borrowing—that is, increasing the debt—and do not wish to impose in the meantime any further burdens on themselves. The former course is manly, statesmanlike, and honest, the latter is convenient, cowardly, perhaps popular. *Nous verrons!*

'Windsor Castle, 18th April, 1854.'

Mr. Gladstone brought forward his War Budget on the 8th of May, by which he proposed to double the Income Tax, and by the returns from this source, and an increased duty on spirits and malt, to bring up the revenue to the level of what was required to meet the increased expenditure for the year. The country was prosperous, and manufacturers busy. 'Such is the vigour, and such the elasticity of our trade,' said Mr. Gladstone, at the close of the masterly speech with which he introduced his Budget, 'that even under the disadvantage of a bad harvest, and under the pressure of war, the imports from day to day, and almost from hour to hour, are increasing, and the very last papers laid on the table show that within the last three months of the year there were 250,000*l.* increase in your exports.' To have shrunk in such propitious circumstances from charging upon the revenues of the year the abnormal expenditure caused by the war, would have been indeed 'cowardly,' and the result proved that Mr. Gladstone had rightly understood the feeling of the country in appealing to them not to adopt this course.

CHAPTER LIV.

The Debate in both Houses (31st March), on the Address in answer to Her Majesty's message, announcing the opening of war with Russia, was worthy of so great and solemn an occasion. Whatever differences existed as to the previous action of the Ministry were buried in the general determination to support them in carrying the struggle to a successful close. In the House of Commons the eloquence of Mr. Bright, proclaiming that his friends and himself regarded the war as neither just nor necessary, was listened to with unusual coldness, while the reply of Lord Palmerston, clear in its statement of the interests, national and European, which were at stake, and vibrating with the ring of patriotic feeling in which he was never wanting, was received with vehement cheers and welcomed throughout the country as a true echo of the national sentiment.[1]

By this time the gravity of the task on which we had embarked had begun to be in some measure appreciated; but there was no disposition to look back or to shrink from the sacrifices with which alone the most sanguine now saw that success could be purchased. Before the debate began in the House of Lords, Lord Aberdeen stated, in reply to a question by the Earl of Roden, that it was proposed to set apart a Day of Humiliation and Prayer for the success of our arms by sea and land. This led to the following letter (1st April) to Lord Aberdeen from the Queen:—

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[1] The Addresses were presented to the Queen on the 3rd of April, both Houses being represented by unusually large numbers. On this occasion the Prince of Wales took his place, for the first time, beside the Queen and Prince upon the throne.

'The Queen rejoices to see the debate was so favourable in the House of Lords, and that it was concluded in the House of Commons.

'She is rather startled at seeing Lord Aberdeen's answer to Lord Roden upon the subject of a Day of Humiliation, as he has never mentioned the subject to her, and it is one upon which she feels strongly. The only thing the Queen ever heard about it was from the Duke of Newcastle, who suggested the *possibility* of an *appropriate* Prayer being introduced into the Liturgy, in which the Queen quite agreed; but he was strongly against a Day of Humiliation, in which the Queen also entirely agreed, as she thinks we have recourse to them far too often, and they thereby lose all effect. The Queen therefore hopes that this will be reconsidered carefully, and a Prayer substituted for the *Day of Humiliation.*

'Were the services selected for these days of a different kind from what they are, the Queen would feel less strongly about it; but they always select chapters from the Old Testament and Psalms, which are so totally inapplicable that all the effect such occasions ought to have is entirely done away with. Moreover, to say (as we probably should) that *the great sinfulness of the nation* has brought about this war, when it is the selfishness and ambition and want of honesty of *one man* and his servants which has done it, while our conduct throughout has been actuated by unselfishness and honesty, would be too manifestly repulsive to the feelings of every one, and would be a mere bit of hypocrisy. Let there be a Prayer expressive of our great thankfulness for the immense benefits we have enjoyed, and for the immense prosperity of the country, and entreating God's help and protection in the coming struggle. In this the Queen would join heart and soul. If there is to be a day set apart, let it be for prayer in this sense.'

The tenor of precedents was adduced in answer to the remonstrances of Her Majesty against the name to be given to the day of national prayer; and a few days later she recurs to the subject in writing to Lord Aberdeen:—

'12th April, 1854.

'The Queen had meant to speak to Lord Aberdeen yesterday about this day of "Prayer and Supplication," as she particularly wishes it should be called, and not "Fast and Humiliation," as after a calamity. Surely it should *not* be a day of *mourning*. The Queen spoke very strongly about it to the Archbishop, and urged great care in the selection of the service. Would Lord Aberdeen inculcate the Queen's wishes into the Archbishop's mind, that there be *no* Jewish *imprecations* against our enemies, &c., but an earnest expression of thankfulness to the Almighty for the immense blessings we have enjoyed, as well as of entreaty for protection of our forces by land and sea, and to ourselves in the coming struggle? If Lord Aberdeen will look at the service to be used at sea, he will find a beautiful prayer, "To be used before a Fight at Sea," which the Queen thinks (as well as other portions of that fine service) would be very applicable to the occasion, as there is no mention of the sea.'

The wish here so strongly expressed as to the character of the services to be used on the day of solemn Fast, Humiliation, and Prayer, was carried out. Like the beautiful prayer referred to by the Queen, they were conceived in the spirit of devout humility, which, while believing its quarrel to be just, places the issues of the struggle in His hands, who 'sitteth in the throne judging right,' with the prayer that He will take the cause of the suppliants 'into His own hand, and judge between them and their enemies.' In this way they met the feelings of the nation, by whom the day (26th April) was observed, not in form merely, but with the seriousness befitting a nation on the eve of a conflict in which momentous issues were at stake, and by which the happiness of many homes was certain to be darkened.[2]

Linked as the reigning families of Europe are by the ties of affinity or marriage, an European war, by the disturbance of many friendly personal relations, brings private sorrows to their members, in addition to those which they suffer in common with their subjects. Correspondence is either broken off, or continued only on the footing that topics are never touched, which yet are known to be uppermost in the writers' minds. The Prince's stepmother, the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, was the daughter of Duke Alexander of Würtemberg, brother of the Emperor of Russia's mother, and had been born and brought up in Russia. Naturally her sympathies were with the Russians, and for some time the Prince's letters to her had been less numerous than usual. On resuming his correspondence with her, he thus clears himself of the embarrassment, which the difference in their political sympathies might otherwise have occasioned:—

'. . . Since I last wrote,' he says, 'the wicked world has gone deeper into wrangling and strife, and war is now formally declared, and will be formally begun. I feel for you, for I can understand and forgive your heart for being Russian. All I ask in return is that you will grant me your forgiveness, that mine is exactly the reverse, and that it even anticipates the just punishment of Heaven upon the Emperor for the embroilment into which he has thrown Europe by his wilfulness and obstinacy! This much I will say to vindicate my own honour: for the future I will hold my peace, and not allow the strife, which unhappily has already caused so much misery in the world, to intrude with its disquieting consequences into the unity, love, and peace of our family also, as I have, I grieve to say, already seen it do in many families.

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[2] The day was also kept with great solemnity in our North-American colonies. In the West Indies a day was also devoted to the same object, and in India the 16th of July was set apart for the same purpose by the inhabitants, both European and native, and observed with such unanimity and fervour, that the Government acknowledged in a public document its satisfaction at the general manifestation of loyalty and attachment.

'If there were a *Germany* and a *German* Sovereign in Berlin, it could never have happened.

'Buckingham Palace. 28th April, 1854.'

How strongly the Prince felt as to the conduct of the King of Prussia, his letters have already shown. His feeling of indignation was deepened by every fresh report which reached him of the state of things in Berlin. The King allowed himself to be a mere tool in the hands of Russia, and, in concert with the Princes of the smaller kingdoms of Germany, was doing his utmost to paralyse the action of Austria, who had shown a disposition to take an active part on the side of the Western Powers.

The dominant influence of Russian counsels was soon afterwards made apparent by the dismissal from the King's service of all the men—Bunsen, General Bonin and others—who had made themselves obnoxious to the Czar by their known antagonism to his policy in Turkey. These changes were effected by the King without communication with the Crown Prince his brother, to whom they were so distasteful that he left Berlin for Baden-Baden, urging the necessities of his health as a reason.[3] On the rumour—false, as afterwards appeared—that the Crown Prince had been deprived of his command, to which this incident gave rise, reaching the Prince, he wrote (13th May) to Baron Stockmar: 'The news has just reached me that the Prince has been deprived of his command, and that the Russian party do not despair of bringing about a rupture between Prussia and France, and of Russia engaging Germany on her side? Will the Lord show long suffering for ever, and not at once send down his thunderbolts from heaven?'

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[3] The King of Prussia, feeling that some explanation of such conduct, at a time when he professed the warmest friendship for England, was due to this country, wrote to the Queen (24th May), at very great length, to justify his

The Baron had correspondents in Berlin, who kept him well informed of the intrigues which were on foot at the Court there. Replying to one of his letters, in which he had forwarded some important details which had reached him through this channel, the Prince writes:—

'Your letter of the 16th, with its enclosure, has reached me safely. I am very grateful to you for this contribution of materials towards an accurate estimate of the present most perplexing and critical aspect of affairs. I have let Lord Clarendon also have a peep into this abyss. I cannot sufficiently praise him in this affair for his unremitting exertions and his friendly way of conducting business. Without his restless activity and temperate and conciliatory spirit, the different unthankful elements would never have

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proceedings. From the reply of Her Majesty we translate one passage:—'One thing only there is which forces me to speak out my heart to you, and it is this—that the men with whom you have broken were loyal, truthful servants, devoted to you with no ordinary warmth of attachment; and who, by the freedom and independence of spirit with which they urged their opinions with your Majesty, have given *proof, not to be gainsayed*, that what alone they had in view was, not their personal advantage or their sovereign's favour, but only his true interest and welfare. And if such men as these—a loving brother among them, a prince noble and chivalrous to the core (*durch und durch*), and nearest to the throne—have felt themselves constrained to part from you at a momentous crisis, this is a *serious symptom*, which may well give Your Majesty occasion to take counsel with yourself, and to test with anxious care whether the hidden source of evils, past and present, may not perhaps be found in Your Majesty's own views.'

been kept together, so that things have been carried on in a way that is upon the whole homogeneous and consistent.

'The best possible understanding exists with the Emperor Napoleon III., and yet his policy, which is composed of continual and frequently dangerous impulses, has constantly to be checked and brought back to a definite channel. We have not up to this time had a moment's cause to complain of Austria, and I think that, with the friendly views of France and England towards her, she has regained some confidence in herself, and that the foundation for a franker policy is being laid.

'I have hanging over me a speech in the City on the occasion of the Bicentenary Jubilee Festival of the Sons of the Clergy.

'Windsor Castle, 24th April, 1854.'

The speech, which the Prince here mentions as hanging over him, was delivered at the Merchant Taylors' Hall on the 10th of May. It was a model of an after-dinner speech, going straight to the point, and enforcing its appeal upon one leading principle, and in the fewest words. On such an occasion, to be original without effort is no easy task. But by touching on one distinctive and important feature of the Protestant Church, the Prince contrived ingeniously to prepare his audience for his argument that a clergy, who had to bear the burdens of family life, but to whom the pursuit of wealth was denied, had a strong claim upon the sympathy and liberality of the community at large :—

'When our ancestors,' he said, 'purified the Christian faith, and shook off the yoke of a domineering Priesthood, they felt that the keystone of that wonderful fabric which had grown up in the dark times of the middle ages was the *Celibacy of the Clergy*, and shrewdly foresaw that their reformed faith and newly-won religious liberty would, on the contrary, only be secure in the hands of a clergy united with the people by every sympathy, national, personal, and domestic.

'Gentlemen, this nation has enjoyed for three hundred years the blessing of a Church Establishment which rests upon this basis, and cannot be too grateful for the advantages afforded by the fact that the Christian Ministers not only preach the *doctrines* of Christianity, but live among their congregations an example for the discharge of every *Christian duty*, as husbands, fathers, and masters of families, themselves capable of fathoming the whole depth of human feelings, desires, and difficulties.'

A tribute to the personal popularity of the Prince was paid in the fact, that the unusually large sum of 12,500*l.* was subscribed on the occasion.

Three days afterwards (13th May) the Queen had the pleasure of giving the Prince's name to one of the finest vessels which had hitherto been constructed for her Navy. 'On Saturday morning we went to Woolwich,' says Her Majesty, in writing to King Leopold, 'where we witnessed, amid thousands and thousands of spectators, the launch of the *Royal Albert* (sister ship to the famed *Duke of Wellington*), 120 guns and 272 feet in length. I christened her, and it was a moving sight to see this immense creature glide into the water amidst the deafening cheers, bearing dearest Albert's likeness.'[4]

It was characteristic of the Prince's energy, that the same day, as appears by his Diary, he went with Lord Hardinge and Sir John Burgoyne by train to Guildford, and thence on horseback to Aldershot Common, over which they rode for three hours, arriving at the conclusion that it would afford 'an admirable site' for the permanent camp, which the Prince had long set his heart on seeing established. A few days later (19th May) he started early in the morning with Lord Derby, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Colonel Talbot, and spent several hours in examining some ground near Epsom Downs, which had been proposed as the site for the Wellington College, but was subsequently found to be inferior to that near Sandhurst, which was adopted in the following October. In the afternoon he presided at a meeting of the Fine Arts Commission, and in the evening went to hear the Cologne Choir, which he mentions as being 'quite admirable.'

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[4] The first service on which this fine vessel was employed was in carrying out reinforcements to the Crimea after the battle of Inkermann. In a letter (24th May) to the Queen from her sister, this passage occurs: 'I read the description in the papers yesterday of the launch of the *Royal Albert*, and your christening it. What a beautiful sight it must have been! Indeed, my dearest Victoria, I can quite understand your wishing to have a son in the navy just now, because I feel so proud of having one there, notwithstanding all the dangers he may be exposed to. What is life worth, if you cannot spend and exert the strength God has given you for a great cause, or on behalf of mankind? It is this conviction which I have always endeavoured to instil into the hearts of my children, because it is the ever vibrating nerve in my own soul which keeps me alive.'

Like all busy men, the Prince seems to have found more time to see and hear things which may be regarded as recreation than those who have most leisure at their command. As we turn over the brief entries of his Diary for this month, the evidence of this forces itself upon us.

The war had immensely increased the graver demands upon his attention. Not a detail in connection with either army or navy escaped him. He knew to a man the strength of both forces, where they were, how equipped, and for what they could be made available. The despatches to and from abroad were more numerous than usual, and the pressure of his correspondence, always great, had grown heavier than ever. One day brings tidings of the bombardment of Odessa, another the unwelcome news of the *Tiger* being taken by the Russians, and all its crew made prisoners; another, that English and French troops have to march upon Athens to compel the King to hold his hand from assailing Turkey. The dismissal of General Bonin, the Prussian War Minister, is noted a few days afterwards as 'a very bad sign,' and the negotiations between Austria and Prussia, who have just executed a secret treaty, cause no small anxiety, which is, however, relieved by the frank explanations of the Austrian Emperor to the Duke of Cambridge, who had taken Vienna on his way to the East. On the 9th Mr. Gladstone brings forward his Budget—an occasion made more anxious than usual by the fact that he had to ask for six millions of additional taxes. These, however, were granted cheerfully in answer to what the Prince notes as 'a very remarkable speech' (*eine ausgezeichnete Rede*). Lord Cowley, over for a few days from Paris, and Sir Hamilton Seymour, just returned from St. Petersburg, have each to be seen, and the precious information at their command elicited by that skilful questioning of which the Prince was a master. Silistria is besieged by the Russians in such force, that the Prince seems to have shared the general opinion, afterwards to be so splendidly confuted by the gallantry of the Turks, under the guidance of two young English officers (Captain Butler and Lieutenant Nasmyth), that it must surrender. Marshal St. Arnaud has begun to grow troublesome by setting up a claim to the supreme command of the Allied forces, and has to be brought to reason. Bunsen, the valued and intimate friend of many years, with whose services the King of Prussia has dispensed, and who is the bearer of a letter of eighteen closely-written pages from his Sovereign to the Queen,[5] has to be seen, and the grave aspect of affairs at Berlin to be discussed with him. But preoccupied although the Prince necessarily was with such incidents as these, he found time to preside more than once during the month at the meetings of the Royal Commission, to hear Faraday lecture at the Royal Institution on 'Mental Education,' to inspect the works of the students of the School of Design at Gore House, and to be present at *soirées* given by Lord Ross to the Royal Society, and by Lord de

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[5] The letter referred to in the note, p. 62 *ante.*

Grey to the Society of British Architects, where he threw himself heart and soul into the study of the inventions and designs which formed the attraction of these meetings, as though science and art were the sole subject of his thoughts.

Nor were the anxieties of the month wholly unrelieved by social gaieties. On Prince Arthur's birthday (1st of May) two hundred children were made happy at a ball at Buckingham Palace, to which Lord Aberdeen, who had little to cheer him in the heavy responsibilities of his office, received the following graceful invitation from the Queen :—'Though the Queen cannot send Lord Aberdeen *a card for a child's ball*, perhaps he may not disdain coming for a short while to see a number of happy little people, including some of his grandchildren, enjoying themselves.' On the 12th, marking the value attached to the French Alliance, the Queen and Prince were present for some hours at a *bal costumé* given by Count Walewski, the French Ambassador,—an honour for which the Count was profuse in his expressions of acknowledgment. The ball, the Prince notes, 'was very brilliant, and the costumes most beautiful.' A great ball, to which 1,800 guests were invited, took place at Buckingham Palace on the 17th, and the Prince records, as the main incident of a Royal concert given a few nights before, that Lablache sang for the first time in England for two years.

The Queen's birthday (24th), which was spent at Osborne, was made memorable to the Royal children by their having given over to them the Swiss Cottage, which had been erected there partly for their pastime and partly for instruction in little household duties, and to which a Museum of Natural History was attached, while beside it were little garden plots allotted to each, where they were expected to make themselves practically acquainted with the simpler elements of garden culture.

On the 21st of June the Prince had to preside at the Trinity

House dinner, and records that of twenty-three speeches made on the occasion no fewer than eight devolved upon himself. All were good; but that which introduced the toast of the Army and Navy was especially so. No man in England was better qualified to estimate the difficulties of the enterprise in which our army and navy were embarked, and knowing, as he did, the impatience with which results were sure to be looked for by the public, he took occasion to indicate what these difficulties were in proposing the toast of the two Services:—

> 'The toast,' he said, 'of the Army and Navy of Great Britain will be drunk by you with peculiar emotions at this time. As your eyes are turned towards these Services, your hearts beat for them, and with their success the welfare and the honour of the country are so intimately bound up. They will do their duty as they have always done, and may the Almighty bless their efforts! What is asked to be achieved by them in this instance is a task of inordinate difficulty, not only from the nature and climate of the country in which they are fighting, but also from the peculiarity of the enemy to whom they are opposed, as it may so happen that the army may meet a foe of ten times its number, whilst the fleet may find it impossible to meet one at all. All these difficulties, however, may be considered as compensated by the goodness of our cause, "the vindication of the public law of Europe," and the fact that we have fighting by our side a Power, the military prowess and vigour of which we have hitherto chiefly known from the severity of long and anxious contests. If there be a contest between us now, it will be one of emulation, and not of enmity.'

This well-timed statement of the object of the war, which was not the maintenance of the Turkish Empire for its own sake, but 'the vindication of the public law of Europe,' was less necessary then than it subsequently became. Still there was a party who forgot, in their disgust at Turkish misrule, the larger issues which were at stake; and it was desirable to keep these prominently before the public mind.

Indeed had it not been felt that they involved something far more important to England and to Europe than the duration of an effete dynasty, the determination to prosecute the war to a successful issue could not have been sustained through the long months of anxiety and loss and gigantic struggle, by which the triumph of right against lawless aggression was ultimately to be vindicated.

This was the first time the Prince had presided over the Elder Brethren since the important alterations in the constitution of their body which had been effected by Parliament in the previous year. To his wise counsels it had been mainly due, that the necessary reforms had been ungrudgingly accepted by them; while, at the same time, by the care he had taken in his negotiations on their behalf, while surrendering to the Government the power of levying dues, which the Trinity House had previously possessed, they retained their independence and powers of administration unimpaired. It was therefore with perfect truth that he was able to congratulate them on the working of these alterations, as 'a successful attempt at that difficult and nice operation to bring the spontaneous activity of a public body into harmony with the general feelings of the country, as represented in its Government, without destroying all individual and organic life by the killing influence of an arbitrary mechanical centralisation.'[6]

Meanwhile all eyes were directed towards the Danube, where the resistance of the Turks to the assaults of the superior Russian forces had excited equal surprise and admiration. The whole efforts of the Russian generals were now concentrated on the siege of Silistria; and, just when the tidings of its fall were looked for as a matter of certainty,[7] came the news of repulse after repulse inflicted upon immense masses of the besiegers. After the English and French army had reached Constantinople, it was felt by our Cabinet that the fall of Silistria would produce a bad effect both at the seat of war and throughout Europe. They therefore were urgent for a movement of English and French troops in support of Omar Pasha, with the view of raising the siege. From Silistria itself came the strongest representations, that it must fall, unless relieved by the Allied forces; but Lord Raglan found it impossible, for want of the means of land transport, to move any portion of his troops from Varna for the purpose. When, therefore, the tidings reached him that on the 22nd of June the siege had been raised, and that the Russians were in full retreat, having lost upwards of 12,000 men in their unsuccessful assaults on the works, no one was more surprised than himself. All the accounts from the English officers at both Schumla and Silistria had represented that it was impossible for the Turks to hold out many days longer, and he opened the despatch from Omar Pasha which announced the retreat of the Russians from Silistria, fully expecting to find in it the particulars of its fall.

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[6] To this hour the invaluable services of the Prince to the Trinity House in the year 1853 are warmly recognised. In a letter from the Secretary of the Board (4th January, 1877) now before us, he says: 'It is a great happiness to us that the wise "sailing directions" then laid down for us have since enabled us (although the navigation is at times difficult and critical) to avoid alike the Scylla of irresponsibility and the Charybdis of losing our corporate identity; and I may add that we continue to be deeply indebted, in the arduous task known in this keen world as "holding one's own," to the moral support which has apparently become a tradition in the Royal family, from, doubtless, in the first instance, the Prince's gracious and illustrious example.'

A crushing defeat of the Russians under General Soimonoff[8] at Giurgevo, on the 7th of July, was soon afterwards followed by the retirement of their whole forces beyond the Pruth.

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[7] Thus, on the 28th of May, the Duke of Newcastle 'regrets to inform Her Majesty that by a telegram received this day from Belgrade, dated yesterday, half-past one o'clock, P.M., the Turkish garrison of Silistria was about to surrender: the terms of capitulation seem to be "*assez honorables*" for the Turks.'

[8] General Soimonoff was killed at Inkermann on the 5th November following.

The invasion of the Principalities was now practically at an end, and the dreaded name of the Czar had been shorn of its prestige by the valour of the Turks, whom he had affected to despise.

The precipitate movement of his forces across the Pruth was no doubt accelerated, in some measure, by the fact that Austria had followed up the Czar's refusal to evacuate the Principalities upon her summons, by concluding a Convention (14th June) with the Porte. In pursuance of its terms she was now moving a large and well-disciplined army into the Principalities, for the purpose of restoring the state of things which had existed there previous to the Russian invasion. With the Austrians on their right flank, and the Allied forces on their left, and confronted by the considerable forces now accumulated under the command of Omar Pasha, the position of the Russian army in the Principalities had become no longer tenable. But though driven back into his own territory, the Western Powers had no reason to believe that the Czar was prepared to abate one jot of his pretensions to the protectorate, civil and religious, of the Greek Christians in Turkey, which had been the proximate and ostensible cause of the war. In fact, the despatch of Count Nesselrode to Prince Gortschakoff (17th June), which embodied the reply to the Austrian summons, placed this beyond a doubt. The private intelligence also, which reached the Cabinets of the West from St. Petersburg, represented the Czar as counting somewhat on the anxiety of Europe for peace, to enable him to secure it on easy terms; while, if forced to carry on the war, he had declared 'that he would do so for twenty years if necessary, and that he should in the end weary out Europe even if it were all united against him.'[9]

But if such was the warlike temper of the Russian autocrat, not less were the Western Powers determined to put his vaunted powers of endurance to the test. Austria and Prussia, indeed, might have been well pleased to negotiate for peace on the footing of the *status quo ante bellum;* and the States of the Diet, ever prone to support Russia as a friend on whom they could rely for resistance to their absorption in an United Germany, had very plainly indicated that this was their view of the basis for a peace. But neither the Government nor people of Great Britain were minded to close the struggle without securing Europe against the hazard of being again plunged into a similar conflict by the renewal of the same pretensions.

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[9] Despatch from Lord Bloomfield to Lord Clarendon, Berlin, 7th July, 1854.

The public feeling on the subject found expression in a speech of Lord Lyndhurst in the House of Lords on the 19th of June,—a speech which must at all times have been remarkable for the luminous force of its statements, the logical vigour of its deductions, the noble rhetoric, which, while it quickened the listeners' blood, also captivated their understanding, but which was especially remarkable as a display of intellectual energy by a man in his eighty-second year. His argument that Russia had shown by her faithlessness and treachery, that it was idle to make engagements with her, was received with enthusiasm by men little given to the display of feeling. Cheers followed cheers, as 'the old man eloquent' denounced a long career of successful perfidy in passages like these:—

> 'Look,' he said,' at her whole conduct, and then, if any person can be credulous enough to trust in any statement of Russia, or in any engagement into which she may enter contrary to her own interests, all I can say is, that I admire the extent of his faith. Let me recall to your lordships' recollection what took place at St. Petersburg. . . . Sir. H. Seymour heard that Russian troops were being collected on the Russian frontier: he was satisfied with his authority, and he mentioned the circumstance to Count Nesselrode. The Count contradicted the statement: he said to Sir H. Seymour: " Do not believe what you hear; believe only

what you see: all that is taking place is only a change in the position of our armies, which is usual at this season of the year. I assure you, you are mistaken. . . ." Is this the system, and are these the persons on whose assurances we are to depend. . . ?

'When the interests of millions are at stake, when the liberties of mankind are at issue, away with confidence. Confidence generally ends in credulity. This is true of statesmen as of individuals. My lords, the history of Russia, from the establishment of the empire down to the present moment, is a history of fraud, duplicity, trickery, artifice, and violence. The present Emperor has proclaimed himself protector of the Greek Church in Turkey, just as the Empress Catherine declared herself protector of the Greek Church in Poland. By means of that protectorate she fomented dissensions and stirred up political strife in the country. She then marched into Poland under the pretence of allaying tumults, and stripped the kingdom of some of its fairest provinces. We know the ultimate result; it is too familiar to require more particular reference.

'Look at another instance of Russian policy of more recent occurrence. Russia agreed to a treaty with Turkey, by which she recognised the independence of the Crimea. Nevertheless she stirred up insurrections in that country, under the old pretence of protecting one party against another, and when the opportunity offered, she sent Suwaroff, one of her most barbarous Generals, into the Crimea, who murdered the inhabitants and despoiled them of their territory, while a line of Russian ships invested the coast and cut off all communication with Constantinople. At the very moment when this was being done, Russia was not only at peace with Turkey, but was actually negotiating a treaty of commerce with her. . . . Russia has doubled her European territories within the last fifty years, and yet she is bent on possessing herself of Khiva. The loss of two armies does not deter her from prosecuting this purpose, although the place cannot be of the slightest value to her, except as affording her the means of annoying us in respect to our Eastern possessions. In this way does Russia go on for ever. Take the most recent instance. While Nicholas was pretending to act the part of protector of Turkey, and trying to cajole the Sultan with professions of friendship and esteem, he was at the time planning the partition of his empire. This is the Emperor with whom you are now dealing, and on whose statements and representations we are to rely.'

More to the same effect followed, leading up to the conclusion, that if any engagement were to be made with Russia, England must take material guarantees for its fulfilment.

'But then my noble friend opposite may say, What course would you pursue? What is your policy? My reply is, that this will depend a good deal on the events of the war. This, however, I unhesitatingly declare, that in no event, except that of extreme necessity, ought we to make peace without previously destroying the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, and laying prostrate the fortifications by which it is defended.'

Prolonged cheering hailed the venerable speaker when he sat down, having closed one of even his finest speeches with the words—

'My lords, I feel strongly on this subject, and I believe that if this barbarous nation, this enemy of all progress except that which tends to strengthen and consolidate its own power, this state which punishes education as a crime, should once succeed in establishing itself in the heart of Europe, it would be the greatest calamity that could befall the human race.'

Lord Clarendon followed, and his language made it clear to all, that if the Government were silent as to the terms of peace to which they looked forward, their silence was not due to any want of will to curtail the dangerous predominance of Russian force, or to check her policy of selfish aggrandisement. 'All Europe,' were his closing words, 'is not to be disturbed, great interests are not to be injured, the people are not to have fresh burdens imposed upon them, great social and commercial relations are not to be abruptly torn asunder, and all the greatest Powers of Europe are not to be united in arms for an insignificant result.'

Had the debate ended here all would have been well. Lord Derby, however, rose after Lord Clarendon, and pronounced a vehement philippic, which was little more than an echo of what had been better said by Lord Lyndhurst. Stung by the implied reproaches of both these brilliant orators, that the Government were disposed to deal slackly with the enterprise they had in hand, and possibly feeling that their language might make it more difficult, by alarming the other European Powers, for England and France to carry these Powers along with them. Lord Aberdeen was tempted to reply. The tone of his statement seemed peculiarly cold after the passionate eloquence of former speakers. Knowing himself to be as solicitous as they could be for an effective peace, but also knowing, as they could not know, how hedged about with difficulty the position of the Government was, a want of heartiness in the cause for which English blood was now up at fever heat seemed to weigh down his words. Even this might have escaped censure, had he not tried to mitigate Lord Lyndhurst's denunciations of Russian encroachments. The ex-Chancellor had gone beyond the fact in alleging that they had enabled the Czars to double their European territory within the last fifty years. But though exaggerated, the general charge was true; and it was idle in Lord Aberdeen to attempt, as he did, to vindicate the systematic aggressions of years by calling attention to the fact that, although the Russians were within twenty miles of Constantinople in 1829, they had not made the surrender to themselves of any Turkish territory in Europe a condition of their accepting the treaty of Adrianople. Only by that fatuity which upon occasion overtakes even the most judicious, was it possible to account for this inopportune reference to a treaty, which Lord Aberdeen in the same sentence denounced as disastrous.

The mischievous effect which it produced was soon apparent. Lord Aberdeen's words were laid hold of, as giving countenance to the charge, thoroughly unjust in itself, but which not merely the adversaries of the Government, but some of its own members, had been at pains to keep constantly before the public, that the war was coldly prosecuted by the First Minister of the Crown, and that he had been dragged into it against his will. So general, indeed, was the dissatisfaction, that Mr. Layard gave notice in the House of Commons a few nights afterwards (23rd June), of a motion 'that in the opinion of this House, the language held by the First Minister of the Crown was calculated to raise grave doubts in the public mind as to the objects and results of the present war, and to lessen the prospect of an honourable and durable peace.'

The Government would not have been sorry to join issue with their opponents on this motion, where they would have been sure of a victory; for as Lord Aberdeen said, writing to the Queen (24th June), 'after the various defeats of the Government, it is most essential that an opportunity should be found of testing the real feelings of the House of Commons.' But he felt it was necessary, for his own sake, that he should remove the misapprehensions created by his speech, and in the same letter he announced that he had given notice of a motion for the purpose. To this communication Her Majesty replied:—

'26th June, 1854.

'The Queen is very glad to hear that Lord Aberdeen will take an opportunity to-day of dispelling misapprehensions which have arisen in the public mind in consequence of his last speech in the House of Lords, and the effect of which has given the Queen very great uneasiness. She knows Lord Aberdeen so well, that she can fully enter into his feelings, and understand what he means; but the public, particularly under strong excitement of patriotic feeling, is impatient and annoyed to hear at this moment the First Minister of the Crown enter into an impartial examination of the Emperor of Russia's character and conduct.

'The qualities in Lord Aberdeen's character, which the Queen values most highly, his candour and his courage in expressing opinions, even if opposed to general feelings at the moment, are in this instance dangerous to him, and the Queen hopes that in the vindication of his own conduct to-day, which ought to be triumphant, as it wants in fact no vindication, he will not undertake the ungrateful and injurious task of vindicating the Emperor of Russia from any of the exaggerated charges brought against him and his policy, at a time when there is enough in that policy to make us fight with all our might against it.'

Lord Aberdeen introduced his statement by moving for a copy of a Despatch written by himself to Lord Heytesbury on the 31st October, 1829, with respect to the Treaty of Adrianople, then recently concluded. The portions of this Despatch which he read were sufficient to prove that he considered the concessions obtained by Russia under that Treaty, though not of territory, were, by the political influence which they gave her over Turkey, really more disastrous to that country's independence, and ultimately to the peace of Europe, than a partial loss of territory would have been :—

> 'Exception,' he said, 'has been taken to some expressions of mine, as if I expressed doubt or disbelief of any danger from Russian aggression. Now I wish here to say that I entertain the greatest alarm as to Russian aggression against Turkey. Against that aggression in any shape—whether in the shape of influence, of conquest, or otherwise—we are prepared to protect her. But with respect to Russian aggression upon Europe, independently of her designs upon Turkey, I certainly did express no great alarm, because I feel none. If Russia, indeed, could be

supposed to have made good her aggression upon Turkey, and to be in possession of Constantinople, then indeed I should feel alarmed, because I think she would then acquire the means of becoming formidable and dangerous to Europe. . . . Danger from Russia to Europe appears to me mainly, if not entirely, to depend upon her power in Turkey and in the East. If that power be checked, then I cannot think that there need be any very great alarm as to what she may do to Austria, or Prussia, or France, or England. This, however much it may have been misunderstood, was really all I meant to express as to my general disbelief in any danger from Russian aggression.'

The general views developed by Lord Aberdeen in his short statesmanlike speech were so thoroughly in accord with those of all moderate men, that he had no difficulty in setting himself right, both with the House of Lords and with the public. Passing over the outrageous attacks upon his sincerity and patriotism, to which he had for some time been persistently subjected, with the remark that he should feel degraded by condescending to enter into details on accusations so absurd and improbable, he explained his attitude with reference to the war in words which, for the time, silenced even his opponents :—

'It is true, my lords, that I have, perhaps more than any other man in this country, struggled to maintain a state of peace. I have done so, because I thought it a duty to the people of this country, a duty to God and man, first to exhaust every possible measure to obtain peace before we engaged in war. I may own, though I trust my conscience acquits me of not having done the utmost, that I only regret not having done enough, or lest I may have lost some possible means of averting what I consider the greatest calamity that can befall a country. It has been said that my desire for peace unfits me to make war; but how and why do I wish to make war? I wish to make war in order to obtain peace, and no weapon that can be used in war can make the war so sure and speedy, and attain peace, as to make that war with the utmost vigour and determination.'

Only one Peer, Lord Clanricarde, was found, after this statement, to renew the old charge of pusillanimity against the Premier, but the elaborate distortion of facts by which the accusation was supported, made more conspicuous by the personal rancour which inspired it, was not calculated to awaken any response in such an arena. The result was that, as Lord Aberdeen wrote the same evening to the Queen, 'it was very coldly received throughout, and ended without a single cheer.' For Mr. Layard to have persisted in his motion after Lord Aberdeen's explanation would have been to court defeat, and he accordingly withdrew it.

In his reply to Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Aberdeen had alluded with some bitterness to what had fallen from him as to the necessity for razing the fortifications of Sebastopol. 'My noble and learned friend,' he had said, 'has given the Emperor due notice that he had better lose no time in fortifying Sebastopol, and I daresay His Majesty the Emperor will follow my noble and learned friend's advice.' It may have flashed across his mind, that the allusion had been prompted by private information, that at this very moment the Cabinet were not at one upon the expediency of an attack upon Sebastopol—expediency, that is to say, with reference to the chances of success, not with reference to the object itself. From the outset of the war it had been generally foreseen, that to succeed there would be to strike at the basis of Russia's power to endanger the peace of Europe. So early as the 14th of March the Duke of Newcastle sent to the Queen the copy of a plan which had been sketched by the French Emperor for military operations in the East, in which he suggested that Sebastopol should be attacked. This plan, the Duke stated, had been approved by Lord Raglan, Lord de Ros, Lord Clarendon and himself. But, looked at more closely, it was found to be beyond the resources at the disposal of the Allied Powers in the early part of the campaign, and whilst the safety of Constantinople was still in jeopardy. But the recent turn of events had revived the idea; and by the 28th of June it was so far matured and adopted by the Ministry as a body, that the draft of the instructions to Lord Raglan which led to the expedition was submitted by the Duke of Newcastle on that day to a meeting of the Cabinet. This meeting was held at Lord Russell's house, Pembroke Lodge,[10] and in writing to the Queen next morning, Lord Aberdeen says:—

'The Cabinet assembled yesterday evening at Lord John Russell's at Richmond, and continued to a very late hour. A draft of instructions to Lord Raglan had been prepared by the Duke of Newcastle, in which the necessity of a prompt attack upon Sebastopol and the Russian fleet was strongly urged. The amount of force now assembled at Varna, and in the neighbourhood, appeared to be amply sufficient to justify such an enterprise with the assistance of the English and French fleets. But although the expedition to the Crimea was pressed very warmly, and recommended to be undertaken with the least possible delay, the final decision was left to the judgment and discretion of Lord Raglan and Marshal St. Arnaud, after they should have communicated with Omar Pasha.'

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[10] This is the meeting which Mr. Kinglake has enlivened his brilliant narrative by describing as if the airy chamber in which it was held had been

> A pleasing land of drowsyhead,
> Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye,

to the influence of which a body of remarkable men, met to decide on a question of momentous importance to the nation, were in some strange way forced to succumb (*Invasion of the Crimea*, 6th ed. vol. ii. p. 249, and note, p. 407). That the Duke of Newcastle, not flattered perhaps by the listless attention paid by some of his friends to his very ably written Despatch, should have mentioned the incident is natural; but the purport of that Despatch having been settled, according to Mr. Kinglake's own admission (*ibid.* p. 410), by the Cabinet the day before with 'anxious care and attention,' the document was not likely under any circumstances to provoke discussion. If, then, a few of the overworked members of the Cabinet succumbed to the soothing monotones of the Duke of Newcastle, why discredit the Cabinet by suggesting that the terms of the Despatch only escaped challenge, because 'all its members, except a small minority, were asleep?' It is not even hinted, that of those who then 'slept the sleep of the weary,' Lord Aberdeen was one, and he at least saw nothing in the Despatch to fetter the discretion of the responsible leaders of the Allied forces, which Mr. Kinglake, upon the weighty authority of Lord Raglan, maintains that it did. The Despatch itself, with the private letter to Lord Raglan which preceded it, are printed by Mr. Kinglake (vol. ii. cap. xvi.).

It is now known, upon the authority of Lord Raglan himself, that he did not consider that the terms of this Despatch left 'the final decision' in his hands. Soldiers naturally judge such matters very differently from civilians, for upon them the point of honour presses more keenly. While, therefore, the language of the Despatch will probably be held by most people to fairly justify the view expressed by Lord Aberdeen, it is nevertheless the fact, that Lord Raglan regarded it as 'little short of an absolute order from the Secretary of State,' and as such 'determined to obey it.'

That the disappointment at home would have been great had it been otherwise, is certain. Impatient as the country had become at the comparative inaction of the Allied forces, people were not disposed to listen to the cautious counsels of those who urged delay, until some certain information could be procured as to the strength of the defences of Sebastopol and the forces which would have to be encountered in the Crimea. Lord Raglan was well aware of this. He knew also, how completely the feeling was shared by the Emperor of the French, for before his Despatch left England, the Duke of Newcastle was in possession of a copy of a letter to Lord Cowley (28th June) in which the Emperor wrote: '*J'avais déjà prévenu la pensée du gouvernement Anglais, en ordonnant à St.-Arnaud que si les Russes se retireraient, il fallait prendre la Crimée, et porter la guerre en Asie.*' The Allied forces were being wasted by sickness and inaction. The greatness of the object in view warranted some boldness in adventure; and the very uncertainty with which the enterprise was invested must have given it some attraction, even for a disciple of the great chief whose rule it was, to leave as little as possible to chance. These, and other considerations which might be suggested, may have all helped, insensibly, to influence Lord Raglan in reading, as he did, between the lines of his instructions, without having recourse to the serious imputation on the Ministry of having dictated an impracticable enterprise to the head of an army in the field.

'Parliament,' says Mr. Kinglake (vol. ii. p. 246), 'was sitting, and it might be imagined that there was something to say against the plan for invading a province of Russia at a moment when all the main causes of dispute were vanishing.' But Parliament had shown, by the incidents recorded in this chapter, that it did not consider, any more than did the country, that 'the main causes of the dispute were vanishing;' while the response awakened by Lord Lyndhurst's words showed conclusively enough, how eager it was for the invasion of the Crimea. The destruction of Sebastopol, indeed, was the thought uppermost in men's minds, and between this time and the period when it was known that the expedition with that object had been decided upon, the press rang with reproaches on the supineness of the Government in not hurling the Allied forces at the great naval stronghold of the Czar.[11] The general feeling was so thoroughly shared by the Prince, that he gave a special study to the question, how the advance against Sebastopol was to be conducted. By a curious coincidence he sent the result of his studies to the Duke of Newcastle the same day (29th June) that the Duke forwarded to the Queen his Despatch to Lord Raglan for Her Majesty's approval. In the letter which accompanied his conclusions, he puts them forward merely as 'the considerations which had occurred to him in his room,' adding, 'but such as they are, you might perhaps communicate them to your colleagues, and even to Lord Raglan when you write to him.'

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[11] Thus, for example, *The Times* writes (24th July): 'We are now approaching the sixth month of actual hostilities, and as yet not a shot has been fired by the land forces of England. . . . The broad policy of the war consists in striking at the very heart of the Russian power in the East, and that heart is at Sebastopol. . . . To destroy Sebastopol is nothing less than to demolish the entire fabric of Russian ambition in those very regions where it is most dangerous to Europe. This feat, and this only, would have really promoted the solid and durable objects of the war.'

The Prince's Memorandum is prefaced by the statement, that 'after the retreat of the Russians from the Danube, and the entry of the Austrians into Wallachia, it appears clear that it cannot be the policy of England to send her troops into the marshy ground of the former, or the exhausted country of the latter; but that our object should be the destruction of Sebastopol, the point which really commands the Black Sea.'

'Sebastopol,' he proceeds, 'appears to be inaccessible by sea. We are in total ignorance as to the strength of its garrison, and it may be difficult, under any circumstances, even for a land force, to carry on a siege against it by regular approaches. Probably, however, it may be possible to establish an efficient blockade both by land and sea, so as to ensure its reduction by starvation. To effect this an occupation of the Crimea in force would be required.

'The British troops in the East amount to 30,000 effective men. The French speak of 80,000, and probably 40,000 may be available for such a service; while the Turks should now be in a condition to send from 30 to 40,000 of their army from the Danube, with a large quantity of siege artillery, which they certainly possess.

'With a combined army of 110,000 men we need not fear to undertake the expedition.

'The question would then only remain as to the best mode of conducting it.

'The first difficulty is the absence of all information as to the Crimea itself, which can in any way be relied upon. We are equally ignorant as to its population, its harbours, its rivers and roads, its means of supplying troops, and the amount of the Russian force employed in it.' To meet this difficulty, the Memorandum suggests, roving expeditions should be made by our steam squadron to all parts of the coast—landings should be effected where possible, and some of the inhabitants carried off and subjected to cross-examination.

How and when to land was the next question. 'The point selected,' the Prince continues, 'should be such as would bring us nearest to Sebastopol, without exposing us to interruption in our early operations from its garrison, and at the same time command and cut off its communications from the interior.' Into this branch of the question he then goes in considerable detail, founding his observations on the map of the Crimea copied by Major Jervis from the Russian official map of 1837, which was subsequently used by Lord Raglan for the expedition. The plateau between the Rivers Katscha and Belbek seemed to the Prince to be well adapted for the formation of an entrenched camp, with a view to the object aimed at, and to offer, from the nature of the ground and its command of the roads to Sebastopol, a secure position for the invaders, and an excellent basis for an attack on Sebastopol. When, however, the Allies reached this ground after the battle of the Alma, it disclosed features which would have made a descent there most dangerous, if not impossible. The Prince then goes on to suggest that the attention of the Russians should be drawn away from the points of invasion by attacks from the sea on other parts of the coast of the Crimea, during which a landing might be effected at the place selected, and time be gained for securing the position by field-works and entrenchments. 'From this position, should it not appear advisable to direct an immediate attack upon Sebastopol itself, such heights might probably be gained in rear of the harbour as would give the means of throwing shells among the shipping and into the dockyard.'

To seize the isthmus of Perekop, or to take up a position to the south of it, so as to prevent the advance of reinforcements to Sebastopol from that side, might also, continues the Prince, be a matter for consideration; but this ought not to be done at any risk to the security of the main body of the invading army, or its efficiency for the investment of Sebastopol.

'It is idle, perhaps,' says the Prince in conclusion, 'to speculate at this distance, and without better information, on the mode of besieging Sebastopol. But we may be justified in contemplating its possible investment by an army from 60,000 to 70,000 men, covered by another from 30,000 to 40,000 strong—the communication of the investing forces with the sea maintained, and the mouth of the harbour blockaded, in hoping for its fall.'

It is probable that no one, either Englishman or Frenchman, had at this time gone more carefully into the subject discussed in this Memorandum than the Prince, for among his multifarious pursuits none seem to have more interested his attention than those of the military tactician and strategist. We are not in a position to say, however, whether it ever went beyond the hands of the Duke of Newcastle; but those who are familiar with what was subsequently done to prepare for the landing in the Crimea will know how closely the steps taken correspond with the main suggestions of the Prince's sketch.

CHAPTER LV.

United as England and France now were in an enterprise for the success of which mutual accord and loyalty were indispensable, it was natural the Emperor of the French should seek to establish personal relations between himself and the Court of England; as these, while gratifying his own ambition, might help to draw closer the political understanding with France, which in the interest of both nations it was most desirable to cement. The first approaches with this view came naturally from the French side. The Emperor had decided on establishing during the summer a camp of 100,000 men between Boulogne and St. Omer, and early in June he asked Lord Cowley as a friend, 'whether he thought an invitation to Prince Albert to come and see the French army there would be acceptable.' In communicating this circumstance to Lord Clarendon, Lord Cowley mentioned that he was sure one of the great objects of the Emperor, in seeking this interview, was the hope, by personal communication, of dispelling the prejudice which he supposed to exist against him. However this might be, the political advantages likely to result from gratifying the Emperor's wish were obvious. A visit from the Consort of the Queen of England could not fail to raise his position with his subjects, and to strengthen his hands as our ally. 'Nor,' added Lord Cowley, 'in calculating the advantages which may result from a compliance with the Emperor's desire, can I forget the impression which Prince Albert's sound understanding must make upon His Majesty, or the results which it may produce.'

The course prescribed by the interests of the country was so clear, that the Prince could not hesitate for a moment in letting it be known that the proposed invitation would be accepted. It came in the following letter:—

'Mon Frère,—Votre Altesse Royale sait que mettant en pratique sa propre idée, et voulant prouver une détermination de soutenir jusqu'au bout la lutte que nous avons commencée ensemble, j'ai décidé la réunion d'une armée entre St.-Omer et Boulogne. Je n'ai pas besoin de dire à votre Altesse quel plaisir j'aurais à la voir et combien je serais heureux de lui montrer mes troupes; je suis d'ailleurs persuadé que les liens personnels contribueront encore à cimenter l'union si heureusement établie entre deux grands peuples. Je vous prie de présenter à la Reine mes respectueux hommages et de recevoir l'expression de l'estime et de la sincère affection que je vous ai vouées. Sur ce, mon Frère, je prie Dieu, qu'il vous ait en sa sainte et digne garde!

'NAPOLÉON.

'St.-Cloud, le 3 Juillet 1854.'

To this the Prince promptly replied:—

'Sire et cher Frère,—C'est avec une bien vive satisfaction que je viens de recevoir la gracieuse et aimable lettre que V. M. a bien voulu m'adresser. Le désir qu'Elle y témoigne de me voir au camp de St.-Omer, ainsi que les termes si aimables dans lesquels Elle a daigné l'exprimer, me font un devoir d'y satisfaire; et ce devoir, je vous prie de le croire, me sera bien doux à remplir, comme il me procurera le plaisir de faire la connaissance personnelle de votre Majesté et de pouvoir lui exprimer en personne, quel prix la Reine et moi nous attachons à l'amitié et à l'intimité des rapports qui unissent les gouvernements et les peuples de nos deux pays.

'Il me sera en outre du plus haut intérêt d'assister à une concentration de troupes de cette noble armée rangée dans ce moment à côté de la nôtre pour la défense du droit public Européen, et de voir ces troupes commandées par votre Majesté elle-même.

'La Reine me charge de ses sincères remercîments pour l'aimable souvenir de votre Majesté, et désire d'être rappelée à celui de l'Impératrice.

'C'est avec les sentiments d'attachement et dévouement bien sincères que je suis,

'Sire et cher Frère,
'de Votre Majesté Impériale
'le bon frère,
'ALBERT.

'Buckingham Palace, le 5 de Juillet 1854.'[1]

Writing to Baron Stockmar a few days afterwards (18th July), the Queen announces the arrangement thus:—'I may now disclose a secret, viz., Albert will go early in September for two or three days to the camp at St. Omer. The Emperor wished it much, and it was also wished here, and thought a right and natural thing to do, considering that our armies are fighting together.' Why and how warmly the Baron approved the projected visit, he tells the Prince in a letter from Coburg a few days afterwards (24th July):—

'I highly approve your intention of going in September to the camp at St. Omer. As a general rule, English politicians do not sufficiently observe the state of things on the Continent with their own eyes. From everything that induces people in an influential position to make such personal inspection I anticipate good, and from the present occasion more than usual, inasmuch as the good or evil destiny of the present time will directly and chiefly depend upon a rational, honourable, and resolute alliance between England and France. Once the war has begun, the weal and woe of these countries, both at home and abroad, as indeed of all Europe, will depend upon whether or not the Allied Powers shall vindicate successfully the principles of honour and justice, and shall not upon any consideration be induced to conclude a peace which shall have the effect of confirming again by treaty, and for a lengthened period, the preponderance of Russia, and therefore of Barbarism over Civilisation.'

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[1] The same day Lord Clarendon writes to the Prince: 'I have the honour to return the Emperor's letter, and the answer of your Royal Highness, which is quite excellent, and must, I am sure, be productive of good effect. I can see no objection, but the contrary, to your Royal Highness addressing the Emperor as "*frère*," and Lord Aberdeen, whom I have consulted, is of the same opinion.'

If ever a Ministry, strong in its own unity of counsels and mutual trust, and strong also in Parliament, was necessary, it was so at the present time. But notoriously discontents reigned within the Cabinet itself. Two at least of its members, Lord Russell and Lord Palmerston, would have preferred to lead rather than to be led. Each had his partisans within and without the Cabinet, and it was apparent to all the world that no cordial unanimity existed between the Peelite section of the Ministry and their colleagues. In the House of Commons the followers of the Government showed no symptoms of coherence. The head of the Ministry was a favourite object of attack with them, no less than with the Opposition. Nor was this met by that display of loyalty on the part of his supporters, which the head of the Government has a right to expect. It was impossible for a Ministry thus obviously not at one with itself to command either the respect or obedience of the House, and, having themselves encouraged insubordination against their chief, some of its members were not entitled to complain, if they found themselves thwarted in their measures through a similar disregard of party ties by the body of the Liberal party.

This want of attachment and support by his nominal friends was so keenly felt by Lord John Russell, that he wished to resign the lead of the House (14th July), and only reluctantly agreed to reconsider his decision. A meeting was summoned for the 17th, at which 180 members of the House of Commons attended, in which, as reported by Lord Aberdeen to the Queen, 'many hostile speeches were made, and much confusion prevailed.'[2] The support of the party was, however, secured at this meeting to the Government measure for separating from the office of Colonial Secretary the duties of Secretary at War, with which these had hitherto been combined, and the way was prepared for carrying a few nights afterwards a vote of credit for 3,000,000*l.* to meet the exigencies of the war during the approaching recess. This vote, in which many of the Opposition might be expected to join, was, moreover, the most favourable issue for the Government which could be raised.

Writing (29th July) from Osborne to Baron Stockmar, the Prince says:—

'The aspect of politics is very singular. The Ministry here has had an explanation with its supporters at Lord John's house, in which their total disorganisation made itself apparent; these supporters have since made the most vehement attacks on particular Ministers, especially Aberdeen, brought forward a motion against the Government, and lost it without a division.

'A vote of credit of 3,000,000*l.* for the Recess has become a vote of confidence for the Ministry. Aberdeen himself is in deep distress at the probable death of his eldest son, as well as the great amount of injustice, not to say folly, on the part of the public. With them the steam is fairly up, as it ought to be in going to war, and Aberdeen is a standing reproach in their eyes, because he cannot share the enthusiasm while it is his part to lead it. Nevertheless, he does his duty, and keeps the whole thing together, and is the only guarantee that the war will not degenerate into crack-brained, fruitless . . . . absurdities,[3] which are certain to turn out solely for the advantage of Russia. Austria has now come to the point where she must make up her mind, and will no doubt conclude an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Western Powers, which will also provide for the accomplishment of certain *defined objects*, such as the evacuation of the Principalities, the abolition of the Russian protectorate over them, the cancelling of all previous Russian treaties, and the substitution of an European for a Russian protectorate of the Christians, or rather of European protection for a Russian protectorate, the opening of the Danube for the commerce of the world, in accordance with the principles of what was settled at the Congress of Vienna, &c. &c. Prussia's conduct is truly revolting, and the King is looked upon by all political men here with profound contempt. Still, I do not think that Austria has anything to apprehend from him, as it professes to have, by way of excuse for its own temporising. Sweden would easily be induced to join, supposing Austria to advance, and Austria will bleed to death financially if she does not help speedily to bring the war to an end.

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[2] In replying to Lord John Russell's report of the meeting, the Queen says (19th July): 'The party which supports the Government is certainly a strange basis for a Government to rest upon; but, such as it is, one must make the best of it. and nothing will contribute more to keeping it together than to give it the impression that the Government is thoroughly united.'

'The inactivity of our army and fleet is attacked on all sides. The Commanders-in-chief have *carte blanche* to do what they can, but what they can or cannot do depends in so many ways on Austria's decision, that any decisive action by them as matters now stand is not to be expected.

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[3] Such as projects for the reconstitution of Poland, and for depriving Russia of Finland, and of the Crimea, &c.

'Uncle Leopold has just written to me to say that he has been invited with his son to his neighbour's camp and will go. He wishes to have his visit over before I come, and names the 1st of September as the earliest day he can be received. On the 5th the coast would be clear for me, and I should then relieve him.

'Now farewell. If my letter be confused, ascribe this to my being in truth intolerably out of sorts, and give us the hope of seeing you soon again.'

The Prince's mention of his own indisposition seems to have alarmed the Baron, who knew well both how little his correspondent was disposed to complain of his own health, and how heavily he had been taxed for many months in both body and mind. In his reply he says:—

'I have to offer your Royal Highness my best thanks for your gracious letter of the 29th. How closely you are entwined round my heart I feel most vividly when I hear, as I do now, that you are unwell and morally unstrung. The desire to be near you, to see you with my own eyes, to hear you, and to be able to comfort you, rises to a pitch of actual impatience.

'People write, but this is only to calm my uneasiness, that it is no more than an ordinary cold, such as you have had before. But this consolation fails in its object, as I rather judge by what the patient says of himself than by the opinion of any third person.

'. . . Upon the whole I feel rather better, so that I am speculating on being able to go to Brussels towards the end of this month. There I can easily hear of any movements your Royal Highness may be contemplating about that time, and after all a meeting may perhaps be arranged, as to which I have had many and grave doubts this year.

'Coburg, 4th August, 1854.'

The Prince, who was delighted at the prospect here held out of a meeting with his friend, after an absence of over eighteen months, urged him in reply not to delay his journey too long. On the 8th of August he wrote:—

'Uncle Leopold goes with his son Leopold on the 1st of September to the Camp of St. Omer, or more properly Boulogne; the days for my visit there will fall between the 3rd and 10th. After my return Clark insists upon our enjoying some Highland air before the rains of autumn set in, and I feel that Victoria needs it as well as myself. I cannot shake off my cough. Still, it is rather better. . . . I hope the state of affairs, political and military, will not prevent us from making our visit to Balmoral. Mountain air would certainly do you, too, a great deal of good. And if the one small room, which is all we have to offer you in that little place, be neither large nor commodious enough, Clark would be delighted to put you up at Birkhall, which is no great distance off.'

On the 12th of August Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person, Her Majesty coming from Osborne for the purpose. The Court returned there the same day. Cholera was then prevalent in London; but from the East the worst news were now arriving daily of its ravages in the Allied armies, where, the Prince's Diary notes (21st August), 'we have lost 500, and the French 5,000 men, and are quite demoralised.' A few days later came the tidings that it had broken out in the fleet also, and that it was uncertain whether the state of the army would admit of the expedition to the Crimea being carried out. The Prince's sympathies were at this time deeply moved by hearing unexpectedly of the death of the brother of Baron Stockmar, and he wrote:—

'A piece of news from Munich, which I found last night in the *Kölner Zeitung*, has cut me to the soul! I flew in thought to you, and can picture vividly to myself the deep grief which so sad an event must cause you. Is it then true, that you have lost your beloved brother? The circumstantiality of the account leaves me scarcely any room for doubt, and yet I go on searching for reasons not to believe it. Let me know soon by some third hand, how you are, for this heavy blow must have told upon you greatly. Would I might be with you, to help to comfort you!

'Here too we have had many sad cases, occasioned by the spread of cholera, among which the most noteworthy is the death of Lord Jocelyn in Lady Palmerston's drawing-room; the malady carried him off in a couple of hours.

'Osborne, 17th August, 1854.'

This brought from the Baron the following reply:—

'My brother died of cholera at Munich on the 10th of this month, in less than eleven hours, and after the most acute suffering. For the domestic happiness of the family, for the private business of the King, his death is a most serious loss. As we have no relations in Munich, he died alone and among strangers—a circumstance which imposes upon me great additional trouble, of which I do not see the end, as to the arrangements about his funeral and succession.

'As he was a philanthropically minded man, to an extent not often seen, he had made for himself a wide circle of friends, who now from numerous quarters pay an honourable tribute to his character. . . .

'My wish and purpose still are, so soon as business and health will permit, to go to Brussels, and thence to England. My chief motive is the yearning to see you once more in this life. Shall I be able to do this? It is uncertain. In these last years I have grown older and feebler. The agitation, the grief of the last fortnight, are not calculated to make me strong and young. . . .

'Most earnestly do I entreat you to be careful of your health. Avoid getting chilled, overheated, or wet. Be prudent about diet.

'24th August, 1854.'

On the 21st of August the Prince had received from the King of Prussia a letter, which he at once forwarded to Lord Clarendon, with a translation for the use of himself and Lord Aberdeen. In sending it, the Prince wrote, 'You will think it curious and interesting in many points, and find it verifies that fear is his strongest motive of action. That he should have held strong language to the Emperor of Russia is of importance, as well as the declaration that he will not allow Austria to be attacked. This corresponds with what I always told you,—that Austria need not be afraid of the King's playing false to her. *Prussia* would at any time rejoice at a difficulty for Austria. The *King* will always be ready to sacrifice even *Prussian interests for Austria.*' [4]

The main object of the letter appears to have been to find out whether our fleet was to winter in the Baltic. 'If,' the King wrote, 'I knew only that the winter quarters of the Baltic Fleet will give no protection to our coasts, we should then know how to protect ourselves.' He had recently been fortifying Dantzig towards the sea. Did he wish on the one hand to explain this away, as not an act of hostility to the Western Powers, but as a defence against Russia—and then, if we said we should not defend him by sea, to be free on the other to maintain that he was bound to defend himself by fortifications? After hearing from Lord Clarendon, with the views of Lord Aberdeen and himself, the Prince wrote the following reply to the King:—

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[4] The King had written: 'The Emperor Nicholas knows at this hour, from my own hand, that the first step across the Austrian frontier will oblige me to meet him with my army and that of the German Confederation.'

'Your Majesty's letter of the 16th inst. reached me safely, and I shall do my best to give Your Majesty the explanations you desire; although I fear they will be found unsatisfactory by you.

'No decision has yet been come to about the winter quarters of the fleet, and the recent occupation of the Aland Islands introduces a new element into the calculation, which will have to be dealt with, before a decision can be come to. This much, however, is certain, that the object of our operations in the Baltic is, to shut up the Russian fleet in harbour, or to annihilate it if it ventures out. So long as there is a possibility of its venturing out, our fleet is sure to be on the look-out for it. The circumstances—bad weather or ice—which would drive our ships away, would make it equally impossible for the Russian fleet to move. I see, therefore, no peril for Your Majesty's seaboard, even should Russia show any special inclination to assail Prussia. So little able are England and France up to this moment to conceive the possibility of such a danger, that they could only regard Your Majesty's orders for the fortification of Dantzig seaward as an act of hostility towards themselves. It appears that this is the impression which the measure has produced upon the people of Germany. Under these circumstances I am glad, for Your Majesty's sake, that you did not make an official appeal to the Queen's Government, which very possibly would have replied, "Prussia has no right to claim protection for her harbours from us, so long as she is not our ally against Russia; nay, while on the contrary she makes use of her neutrality to give Russia the means of pushing her trade through these ports, and so thwarting us in one of our chief measures for carrying on the war."

'In this Your Majesty will no doubt find an outburst of the unfortunate animosity of English diplomacy to your person, of which you complain. I should not be dealing with you as a true friend, were I not frankly to avow that this animosity does in fact exist, not merely, however, in English diplomacy, but also in the English nation, the French nation, and also, unless I am mistaken, in a considerable section of the Germans. And Your Majesty will scarcely say that it is wholly unjustifiable if you recall the events of the last few months.

'The four Powers acted in perfect harmony up to last March, when Prussia rejected the Quadruple Treaty which Austria, with the wisest intentions, had proposed. To satisfy Prussia, the much less binding Protocol of the 9th of April was substituted for it; and simultaneously with the closing of the Chambers, all Your Majesty's servants were dismissed, who were well affected to the Western Powers and who stood in the bad graces of the Emperor of Russia. Since that time Prussia has been the chief drawback to the energetic adhesion of Austria to the Western Powers, and the cause why it has been to a certain degree possible for Russia to thwart the policy of Austria. The Prussian ambassador was forbidden to take part in the Conferences at Vienna in July, whereby the three Powers felt themselves almost compelled to act alone; besides which, at the most critical moment, and at the most favourable season of the year, three weeks were lost before the Ultimatum could reach St. Petersburg, which could not be despatched from Vienna till the 10th inst. In short Russia obtained from Prussia that *neutralité bienveillante* which it had desired from the outset, but which, in the same degree in which it is *bienveillante* to Russia, could not but be regarded by the Western Powers as hostile to them. I am quite aware that you do all this in order to secure for Prussia the blessings of peace, but you must not be surprised if the West shows displeasure towards a Government whose policy is directed solely to protracting the state of war, to throwing obstacles in the way of peace, and flinging wide the entrance for the spirit of revolution; which proffers Russia the most important services, by keeping Germany divided, by crippling Austria, by fostering Russian commerce; and in this way prevents the European Question, which has been raised by the misdeeds of Russia, from being settled in the *interest* of Europe, and by an *united* Europe.

'Whether the Emperor of Russia will be permanently benefited by this, I must leave to time to show. For the longer the war continues, the heavier will be the conditions which the Western Powers will feel themselves justified in exacting. And the longer Russia is misled into relying upon the support of Prussia, the more grievous will be her disappointment,—for of these in this imbroglio she has already had so many—when Prussia is brought to the point, where she must act up to her assurances. The animosity of Russia, of which Your Majesty is already apprehensive, will then fall exclusively upon Prussia, and I tremble at the thought, that she shall be held responsible both by Austria and the West for all the suffering and loss, which a well-timed combined action of all the Powers would have averted. The angry feeling which now prevails is an indication not to be mistaken of what may be expected. May the Almighty direct all for the best!

'With Victoria's warmest greetings, I remain, Your Majesty's most faithful servant and kinsman,

'ALBERT.

'Osborne, 28th August, 1854.'

The time for the Prince's visit to France was now drawing near, and on the 29th of August the Queen writes to King Leopold:—'To our great joy, Stockmar writes on the 22nd, that he intends to set out shortly for England, which will be a great pleasure, and I trust he will be here during Albert's absence. This would be a great support and comfort to me, as you know how forlorn and melancholy I am when he is away. Moreover, this will be the longest absence, since the one ten years ago, when that dear angel, now no longer with us,[5] comforted and supported me, and when you also were so kind and good to me. He leaves me on Monday evening (4th) and I trust will be with me again early on Saturday the 9th.'

The Queen's hopes as to Stockmar were disappointed, as he was not able to come to England for some weeks. The Prince left Osborne on the evening of the 3rd of September, accompanied by the Queen in the *Fairy* as far as Spithead. Along with him were the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Seaton, General Wetherall, General Grey, Captain (now Lord) De Ros, and Captain (now Colonel) Du Plat. The following passages, translated from the Prince's letters to the Queen, will be the best record of the incidents of this memorable visit:—

'"Victoria and Albert," 4th September, 1854.
'Ten miles from Boulogne. Nine o'clock.

'Whilst you sit at breakfast with the children, and are teased by the wasps, of which Arthur is horribly afraid, and makes grimaces at, I sit in the cabin at my table (yours is there empty), and wish you on paper a friendly good-morning. The night was superb. After we had thrown you, by blue lights, a parting salutation, which you returned from the *Fairy*, following it by one last greeting under a flare of torches, which was left unanswered, we travellers sat upon deck till half-past eleven, in the glorious moonlight. It was close upon twelve when I got to bed in the cabin, which had a very blank and desolate look.

'When I got up this morning about seven, in splendid weather, the first news was, that our stupid ships of war were "out of sight astern." They were not where they should have been, despite a fourteen-hours' start in advance, and express orders "to make the best of their way." So we shall have to run in without escort, and without even having it in our power to return the French salute. Denman is very wroth about it, and we share all his annoyance, which, however, can do neither him nor us any good.

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[5] Louise, the late Queen of the Belgians.

'About ten we shall make the port, and I have to get myself into full uniform dress beforehand. Shortly afterwards some further news, my dear child!'

'Boulogne, half-past one o'clock.

'We have arrived safely, as the telegraph will have told you. The Emperor met me on the quay,[6] and brought me here in his carriage to an hotel at the back of the town near the railway station, which he has hired for the occasion, but which looks more like an old French château, only two stories high, with long wings, a paved courtyard and a grillage in front.

'The Emperor has been very nervous, if we are to believe what is said by those who stood near him, and who know him well. He was kindly and cordial, does not look so old or pale as his portraits make him, and is much gayer than he is generally represented. The visit cannot fail to be a source of great satisfaction to him. He asked me at once whether I could stay here till the 9th, which is the earliest day he can get the troops together for a grand review? I assured him I must embark again on the evening of the 8th, and that this was the latest moment I could give him. You see, a shorter visit would have been a mistake. Drouyn de Lhuys and Maréchal Vaillant are the "persons of note" who are here, besides General Montebello, whom we saw at the camp in England, and Colonel Fleury; all the other gentlemen are officers of no distinction.

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[6] 'The Emperor,' Lord Cowley wrote, the same day, to Lord Clarendon, 'had intended to go on board the yacht, but the Prince was beforehand with him, and stepped on shore as soon as the gangway was established. . . . I thought the Emperor very nervous (the first time I ever saw him so) as we were driving down the quay; and the Duke of Newcastle tells me that the tears stood in His Majesty's eyes while he expressed the pleasure which he received from this fresh proof of the cordiality of the alliance which England proffered him.' The Prince was the bearer of an autograph letter to the Emperor from the Queen, by the terms of which he was much gratified.

'I have had two long talks with the Emperor, in which he spoke very sensibly about the war and the "*question du jour*." People here are far from sanguine about the results of the expedition to the Crimea, very sensitive about the behaviour of Sir Charles Napier, scantily satisfied with Lord Stratford; nevertheless, so far as the Emperor is concerned, determined to consider the war and our alliance as the one thing paramount, to which all other considerations must give place. To all complaints I have only replied, that to carry public opinion with us in England is the main point (so far as consequences go), and that this is firmly rooted in support of the war; that Sir Charles Napier, Lord Stratford, and Lord Palmerston are the three persons who alone could carry on the war. . . .

'Uncle Leopold was here for a couple of days, and left a letter for me; he seems to have preached peace. Pedro [the young King of Portugal] was here yesterday with his brother, and made a very favourable impression. "*Il a tout-à-fait gagné mon cœur*," was the Emperor's expression. He has returned to Ostend, and people here understood that he is to go to England; I therefore conjecture that he will pay you a visit at Osborne. Should this be so, I shall be greatly pleased if you can keep the young people till I return. It would be too sad for me not to see them before they go back to Portugal.[7]

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[7] The King and his brother, the Duke of Oporto, had come to London at the beginning of June, and by their intelligence and fine dispositions had inspired him with a warm attachment for them.

'About half-past eleven we had a *déjeuner à la fourchette.* The dinner hour is six. About four we are to ride to the camp of a Division, which is pitched on the Dunes near the sea, about five miles from here. About seven A.M. to-morrow we go to St. Omer (thirty-two miles off), where the whole day is to be devoted to a review. I fear this will leave me no time to write to you at any length. The heat is fearful, and my little room has the much-lauded "south aspect," which has the effect of making my fingers stick to the paper.

'I forgot to name Lord Cowley, who is here, and makes a useful "go-between." Meyer [*Stallmeister*, or Master of the Prince's Stable] is in a state of supreme delight (*äusserstem Gloriole*), and yet dissatisfied that I will not put on the saddle-cloth, as here everything is so gorgeous.

'Now I conclude for the present, as the Maire is waiting for me.'

'Half-past seven P.M.

'We have only now got back from the camp, after a very fatiguing ride; the hills very steep, the roads detestable. We went to two separate camps, each consisting of an infantry division of 8,000 men. Lord Seaton had a fall from his horse, but did himself no mischief. I must make haste with dressing for dinner. Meanwhile the messenger leaves, so I must conclude.'

'Boulogne, 5th September: ten P.M.

'Before I go to bed, I must wish you good-night upon paper, even though the wish may be rather late in reaching your dear hands. I have to go out to-morrow morning by six, so that there will be little time for writing. The Emperor thaws more and more. This evening after dinner I withdrew with him to his sitting-room for half an hour before rejoining his guests, in order that he might smoke his cigarette, in which occupation, to his amazement, I could not keep him company. He told me one of the deepest impressions ever made upon him was when, after having gone from France to Rio Janeiro and thence to the United States, and been recalled to Europe by the rumour of his mother's serious illness, he arrived in London shortly after King William's death, and saw you at the age of eighteen going to open Parliament for the first time.

'To-day Soliman Pasha has turned up, jovial as ever. We spoke of military caps: he remembered one in the Imperial army in 1813; one of the Generals said, "*C'était les bonnets à la Marie Louise.*" "*Ah, j'aime mieux qu'on les appelle à la Napoléon, moi,*" was his rejoinder, with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders. The Empress's brother-in-law, the Duke of Alba, is here.'

'6th September: half-past six A.M.

'Good-morning! Though my bed was too short, the counterpane too heavy, the pillows of feathers and the heat frightful, I have slept pretty well, and am already booted and spurred. The heat in the dining-room yesterday was terrible. The weather seems fine to-day, but windy. I must be off. More this evening, should we return before the messenger has to leave.'

'Quarter-past six P.M.

'I avail myself of the moment I have before dinner to tell you that we got back half an hour since, and that I found your letter of the 4th and 5th waiting me here. My warmest thanks for it. Give Vicky also and Lenchen thanks for theirs. . . . We made our way for three hours by post (quite after the manner described by Albert Smith[8]) to the hamlet of Viserne, breakfasted there in a peasant's cottage, had some time to wait for our riding horses, and ultimately rode to the heights above St. Omer, where 20,000 men under General Carlot were posted, two infantry and one cavalry division (of Cuirassier regiments),—superb troops.[9] I am called to dress.

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[8] In his *Ascent of Mont Blanc*, which he had given at Osborne on the Prince's last birthday (26th August), and by which two words in the Prince's Diary (*sehr komisch*) show that he, like the rest of the world, had been greatly amused.

'Half-past nine P.M.

'The messenger is on the point of returning. During the six hours (three hours going and three returning) which I passed in the carriage with the Emperor alone, we discussed all the topics of home and foreign policy, material and personal, with the greatest frankness, and I can say nothing but good of what I heard.

'He has explained his relations to Persigny in exchange for my communication as to ours to Palmerston, and I have made him understand our position with reference to his *coup d'état*. His wish is to see Spain and Portugal united. I have unfolded our reasons for a different view; we have discussed political economy, taxation and finance, reformatories, prisons, and transportation, constitutional government, liberty and equality, &c., all *secundum artem*, &c. &c. More of this hereafter by word of mouth. He was brought up in the German fashion at the Gymnasium in Augsburg, where he passed the greater part of his childhood—recollections which have remained dear to him, and a training which has developed a German turn of thought. As to all modern political history, so far as this is not Napoleonic, he is without information, so that he wants many of the materials for accurate judgment. He has made a thorough study of military matters, and is completely master of them.

'I send two of the new gold five-franc pieces which the

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[9] 'His Royal Highness,' Lord Cowley writes to Lord Clarendon (6th September), 'is much admired by the French officers; indeed his affability gains all hearts.'

Emperor gave me, one for yourself, and one for the numismatical department of the children's museum.'

'Boulogne, 7th September, 1854.

'. . . It is now ten. I have just returned from a stroll with the Emperor through his stables, where the alliance is typified by the union of his horses and my own. To-night the Duke of Newcastle received his despatches from Varna and Hango. General Jones reports that it would be easy to bombard and even to take Helsingfors; Napier pours cold water upon the project. Raglan continues to speak only indirectly of the Crimea.

'The Emperor is to visit the yacht to-day. In the afternoon we go to inspect the Division. By five this morning troops passed through the town for to-morrow's review. I have had a letter from Pedro, according to which he is to go to Osborne, but bids me adieu: ask him not to leave till Saturday evening, so that I may arrive in time to see him and Louis.

'I have this moment (two P.M.) received your letter of yesterday. Hearty thanks for it and all the words of love. . . . The Portuguese are with you, as the telegraph intimates, and I have sent you my reply. The review to-morrow will not be far from Calais. The heat and dust put us to a severe trial, still I am well. The Emperor has been greatly delighted at making Uncle Leopold's acquaintance.

'Half-past ten P.M.

'I wished to have sent you some further news, but now there is no time to do so. It was eight o'clock before we got back from the camp. I have just risen from dinner, and the messenger must be off. I have in general terms expressed to the Emperor your wish to see him in England, and also to make the Empress's acquaintance. His answer was, he hoped on the contrary to have an opportunity of receiving you in Paris. Next year the Louvre would be completed for the Exhibition. I must leave the matter here, and unless he says, "I will come, when can the Queen receive me?" I cannot fix any date. Perhaps the inquiry may come to-morrow. I have talked to Lord Cowley. He will gladly come with him. At this moment hope runs high about Sebastopol. I hear, alas! by the telegraph that the Portuguese will not grant me the twelve hours I ask, which is very shocking of them.

'To-morrow morning we turn out about six; I must be up and stirring by five.

'. . . This is the last letter you will receive from me. To-morrow evening *we* start, and not the messenger.'

The Prince records in his Diary the same day, that 'upon the whole he was greatly pleased' with the Emperor (*im Ganzen recht zufrieden mit ihm*); and on his return to Osborne, he wrote to renew in writing, as the letter bore, the expression of his gratitude for the kind reception given to him by His Majesty at Boulogne. 'The remembrance,' he added, 'of the days I have just spent there, as well as of the trustful cordiality (*la confiante cordialité*) with which you have honoured me, shall not be effaced from my memory. I found the Queen and our children well, and she charges me with a thousand kind messages for your Majesty. The King of Portugal was still in Cowes Roads, on board his yacht, which had been kept back to complete her coaling—a piece of Portuguese backwardness to which I am indebted for the pleasure of seeing him again for a few minutes.'

CHAPTER LVI.

Two days after his return from Boulogne the Prince dictated the following Memorandum to General Grey. Its value as an authentic historical document cannot be overstated, nor is it less valuable for the light which it throws upon the Prince's character, by the remarkable contrasts between himself and the Emperor of the French which were elicited in the unreserved discussions which each seems equally to have courted:—

' *Memorandum on my Visit to Boulogne.*

'I think it will not be uninteresting to note down some of the impressions which I have gathered, and the purport of the conversations which have passed between the Emperor and myself, during my stay of four days with him at Boulogne. I saw a great deal of him during that time, having been thrown entirely into his company, particularly during our drives to and from the different encampments of the troops. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the openness and want of reserve with which he broached all the most important topics of the day, and hope I was as open and unreserved in the expression of my own opinions.

'He appeared quiet and indolent from constitution, not easily excited, but gay and humorous when at his ease. His French is not without a little German accent;—the pronunciation of his German better than that of his English. On the whole I observed a good deal in his turn of mind, that is owing to his education at Augsburg, where, as he told me, he was brought up at the Gymnasium. He recited a poem of Schiller on the advantages to man of peace and war, which seemed to have made a deep impression upon him, and appears to me to be not without significance with reference to his life.

'His Court and household are strictly kept, and in good order, more English than French. The gentlemen composing his *entourage* are not distinguished by birth, manner, or education. He lives on a very familiar footing with them, although they seemed afraid of him. The tone was rather the *ton de garnison*, with a good deal of smoking; the Emperor smoking cigarettes, and not being able to understand my not joining him in it. He is very chilly, complains of rheumatism, and goes early to bed; takes no pleasure in music, and is proud of his horsemanship—in which, however, I could discover nothing remarkable.

'His general education appeared to me very deficient, even on subjects which are of a first necessity to him—I mean the political history of modern times, and political sciences generally. He was remarkably modest, however, in acknowledging these defects, and showed the greatest candour in not pretending to know what he did not. All that refers to the Napoleonic history he seems to have at his fingers' ends; he also appears to have thought much and deeply on politics; yet more like an "Amateur Politician," mixing many very sound and many very crude notions together. He admires English institutions, and regrets the absence of an aristocracy in France; but might not be willing to allow such an aristocracy to control his own power, whilst he might wish to have the advantage of its control over the pure democracy.

'*Government.*—He asked me a good deal about the internal working of the English Government; whether the Queen presided *à son conseil*, whether she saw all the despatches, &c. &c. I told him that the Queen presided in person at the Privy Council, which, however, passed without discussion only matters which had been pre-arranged; that the Cabinet met and discussed alone, but that the Queen was informed by the Prime Minister of the object of their meeting, and of the result of their deliberations. He said he did not allow his Ministers to meet or discuss matters together—that they transacted their business solely with him. He rarely told the one what he had settled with the other. He seemed astonished when I told him, that every Despatch went through the Queen's hands, and was read by her, as he only received extracts made from them, and indeed appeared to have little time or inclination generally to read. When I observed to him, that the Queen would not be content without seeing the whole of the diplomatic correspondence, he replied that he found a full compensation in having persons in his own confidence at the different posts of importance, who reported directly to him. I could not but express my sense of the danger of such an arrangement, to which no statesman—in England at least—would consent, and which enabled the Foreign Minister (if he chose to cheat his master) always to plead to foreign countries his ignorance of what might have been done, or to throw the entire blame, in any difficulty that might occur, upon these secret instructions. The Emperor acknowledged all this, but pleaded necessity.

'*M. Drouyn de Lhuys.*—He praised Drouyn de Lhuys, only complaining of his haste. He had the other day, for instance, caused annoyance at Vienna by having sent there literally the very expressions in which the Emperor had instructed him, and which were intended only as a guide to him. I observed that this could not have happened in England, where every draft had to receive the Sovereign's sanction in the shape in which it was to go.

'*Lord Palmerston.*—The Emperor asked me what were the Queen's objections to Lord Palmerston? He had always been *très-bon pour lui.* I replied I did not know what reason he could have for gratitude to Lord Palmerston; the only thing I knew was that he hated the Orleans family, and *que cela pourrait bien être pour quelque chose* in what appeared *bonté pour lui.*

'To satisfy the Emperor's wish to know why, I had to refer to the quarrel between Lord Palmerston and King Louis Philippe on the subject of intervention in Spain in 1835, when the King sacrificed M. Thiers to break through the engagement for such an intervention, on the ground that intervention in the affairs of Spain had at all times brought ruin on France and the dynasty which undertook it—an axiom the truth of which he knew in 1835, and proved in 1848 by acting diametrically against it. The Emperor seemed to know very little about that whole contest, which I had further to detail to him; but still he concurred in the truth of the axiom.

'As to Lord Palmerston and the Queen's objection to him, the story was easily told. When he, the Emperor, had made his *coup d'état*, which I called *une affaire douteuse dont personne ne pouvait prévoir les conséquences*, the Queen had enjoined the strictest neutrality to her Government as to that event; the Cabinet had met, and declared that it entirely concurred in the Queen's view, and had directed Lord Palmerston to prepare a draft explaining this to the French Government. The draft did not come for many days; and when it arrived, Lord Normanby, who took it to the Minister for Foreign Affairs[1] (whose name, oddly enough, neither the Emperor nor myself could remember), was met with the assurance, that the Government had received already Lord Palmerston's entire adhesion to and approbation of the measure. The Queen asked for explanation from Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, who, after having had to wait several days, received at last so rude an answer that he had to send Lord Palmerston his dismissal. This rendered it impossible for the Queen to have him again for Foreign Secretary. But the Queen and myself had long been at variance with Lord Palmerston as to the main principle of his foreign policy, which was even an exaggeration of that laid down in Mr. Canning's celebrated speech in December 1826. The Emperor not being acquainted with this important turning-point in our political history, I had to explain it to him, and to show that the object of it was to form a counterpoise to the Holy Alliance of the Governments on the Continent, by supporting the popular parties in every country, with a view to establishing constitutions after the model of our own. This was a doctrine very like that of the Jacobin propaganda, and had produced the greatest hatred of England all over the Continent. (This the Emperor heartily assented to.) It produced, I said, the further inconvenience to England, that an English party was formed in every country, which, if worsted, brought defeat and discredit on the English Government; but, if successful, had to prove its independence of England, by taking every measure that was hurtful to her. Lord Palmerston, detested by the Continental Governments, had been the object of every species of malignity, attack, and intrigue on their part. This was known in England to the public, roused the national indignation in his favour, and gave him great popularity. The power which this popularity gave him he used in order to coerce his colleagues and his Sovereign into anything he chose to advocate. Any resistance was at once signalised as forming part of the grand European combinations against him.

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[1] Monsieur Turgot.

'*Count Walewski.*—The Emperor asked me how Count Walewski was liked in England? I told him, very well;

perhaps the Emperor knew that he had not a great deal of tact ("None at all," said the Emperor); but Lord Clarendon told me that, during the whole time he has had to do with him, he had never once told him a lie, which, in my opinion, covered a multitude of sins, as it was the first necessity for public business.

'*Lord Aberdeen.*—The Emperor did not say much about Lord Clarendon, but allowed me to perceive that his distrust and dislike of Lord Aberdeen were deeply rooted. I represented the latter to him as *d'une probité et d'un cœur d'or.*

'*M. Persigny.*—He spoke about M. Persigny and entered into their mutual history, and bewailed that since his marriage he was a totally altered person, and quite lost to him. He had never had talent for administration, and in his extreme vivacity made a great many enemies. Yet of the hundred projects which his fertile imagination continually brought forth, even if the Emperor, as usually happened, disagreed with ninety-nine of them, there was sure to be one valuable enough to adopt. It had been necessary to take the *intérieur* from him, but, since then, he had refused to keep a seat in the Council, and had done the Emperor and the Government the greatest harm by his unmeasured language, which found its way to the press. The idea that he was sacrificed to a Russian intrigue arose in his own brain.

'I begged to observe that, however unfounded the idea might have been, the Russian party had long before designated him as a man to immolate.

'*Public Men—Finance.*—We conversed on the immorality of public men in France, particularly with regard to money transactions. The Emperor maintained that he could vouch for the integrity of the members of his Government, but not beyond, and this was one of his greatest difficulties. For instance, nothing had done him or his Government more harm than the attempt at the loan on the *Crédit Mobilier.* The transaction had been a very simple and unobjectionable one when proposed to him. The *employés*, however, immediately drove up the 500-franc shares to 3,000, then sold and let the whole thing fall, which brought ruin on numbers of families. He was determined to do them in return, and had, without saying a word to anybody, opened a general subscription of the people through the prefects in every village. The effect had been marvellous. The whole loan was subscribed for in a day by the lowest classes, who were as much delighted at the measure as the money-lenders and *agioteurs* were annoyed, and brought their money *seulement pour le donner à Napoléon.* He would have to recur to this again probably next year. I told him we had been very much pleased with *our* financial operations. "*Votre emprunt a donc réussi?*" the Emperor said. I explained to him that we had not borrowed a shilling, nor, as he then supposed, emitted paper, but had raised additional taxation sufficient to pay the expenses of the war, about fifteen millions for the year (375 millions of francs). He seemed to have been quite ignorant of this, and expressed great astonishment. I then went cursorily through Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Budget, his critique on the *heaven-born* Minister Pitt, and thought it useful to show the untruth of the two most prevailing impressions on the Continent: that our debt was so large we could not add to it, the fact being that it was fifteen millions less than in 1815—the capital of the country being worth four times as much as it was at that time; the other, that England could never go to war, because the people would object to bear the burthens and sacrifices necessary for it, which the present case, I hoped, sufficiently disproved.

'This led us to a general discussion on finance and commercial policy—the Emperor leaning to indirect taxation; I condemning indirect taxation as a principle, but acknowledging its necessity as a sacrifice to the weakness of human nature, which cannot bear to see the money go direct from the pocket of the individual to the coffers of the State. I particularly condemned the ever-recurring attempts of the successive French Governments to control the price of bread. He declared this a necessity, as when bread was dear the people became ungovernable. The town of Paris had had to sacrifice sixteen millions of francs last year for that object, which he hoped to get back now after a plentiful harvest. I could not but express my doubts whether he would find it practicable to get back a shilling. As to the stability of the Government, nothing appeared to me so dangerous as to establish and acknowledge an immediate connection between it and the price of bread. He admitted this, but repeated that there was no help for it.

'We talked over general principles of government, I maintaining that the destinies of nations were less controlled by armies and rulers than by the philosophers of the day. I attributed the whole difficulty of the Government in France to the absurd doctrine of equality as an accompaniment to liberty, which was in fact its negation, and to Rousseau's *Contrat Social*, which represented man as originally free, and surrendering only a portion of his liberty to the State, in return for which he obtained certain advantages. This doctrine made it a continued matter of calculation, whether the advantages were adequate to the sacrifices, and in distress or difficulties of any kind the individual was prone to consider himself freed from his obligations to the State, whilst in reality man was originally in the most abject state of dependence, and obtained the condition for acquiring any liberty only through the existence of the State, its laws, and civilisation. Matters would not get better till some great mind arose and made a sounder philosophy popular. The Emperor seemed struck, and agreed with the truth of this; but objected that no writers would for an immense length of time find their way to the people of France. Good writing had no chance at all, for even the worst writing of the Socialists, who worked upon the lowest passions of the crowd, had in fact hardly penetrated the surface of society. He instanced as a proof his own election for the National Assembly at Metz, where the Socialist candidate, who had all the votes pledged to him, saw them given to himself, a stranger just arrived, merely on account of the name of Napoleon. This name was the only thing left which still united the sentiments of the people. How little the people followed even the history of their own times was again illustrated to him on his way with the Empress to Biarritz, when, through a large portion of the south of France, the people cried: "*Vive Marie-Lòuise!*" He had also heard on a former journey cries of "*Enfin voilà le vieux revenu!*"

'*The Army.*—The army seems a great object of the Emperor's solicitude. He acknowledged that the war had found him *impourvu.* He had to refurnish almost his whole material, but was going on satisfactorily, and would be quite ready next year. He intended the camps to be maintained during the whole winter, *pour aguerrir les troupes.* He had placed his whole artillery on a uniform system—twelve-pounders, which he was very proud of, as well as of the new carbine, his own invention, and a rocket of very large calibre, which has carried up to 6,000 mètres, and from which he expects great results. He had likewise had experiments carried on as to the power of resistance of wrought-iron, which proved that, at a given angle, a small thickness, like two inches, would resist any shot—the shot splitting. He thought an application of this to floating batteries to be the way for taking Cronstadt without any loss. The project has been communicated to the English Admiralty for consideration. He is evidently anxious to become a good general, and has much studied the wars of his uncle. In the command of his troops he appeared inexperienced, though calm and self-possessed, and very modest and ingenuous as to what he had yet to learn; but decidedly showing talent for it.

'The troops were young, but both men and horses much stronger and finer than used to be the case with the French army.

'The Emperor was almost the only person amongst the French at Boulogne who had any hope of the success of the expedition against Sebastopol, and the astonishment was great that our whole party of English officers were so sanguine about it. The Emperor strongly condemned St. Arnaud's march into the Dobrudja, which had been positively forbidden. Before we left Boulogne, accounts arrived from Varna announcing the decision to go to the Crimea, St. Arnaud writing, in true French style, of himself, "*Je suis plein de confiance et plein d'ardeur.*"

'The Emperor expects Austria to join us more actively, and spoke without bitterness of the King of Prussia, whose hesitation he could well understand. He expressed himself very kindly about my brother, whose patriotism as a German he admired. This led us to the field of *German Politics*, on which I saw that he had the common dread of all Frenchmen, that Germany would become formidable if too strongly united, and fancied that, with Prussia and Austria constituted separately, the rest of the German States might unite in a closer body. I explained to him that this plan was called that of the "Trias," was advocated by Bavaria for selfish purposes, but was based upon an entire want of knowledge of the real conditions of Germany, as, whilst Austria might be severed from the rest, Prussia could not be torn out of the system without destroying it in all its parts, and what remained, if this were done, could not preserve any moral or physical cohesion. Hanover, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, &c., for instance, were lying within Prussia, Protestant, and had almost no common interest with the Catholic south.

'The Emperor was much pleased with the visit of the King of the Belgians, but I could perceive that he had not lost his dread of him. The Duke of Brabant [the present King of the Belgians] struck him for his *finesse* at that early age ; "*il lui avait dit des choses si fines, il avait été tout étonné.*" He much blamed the conduct of the Belgian Government, which had made a constitutional point of the King's not visiting the Emperor,[2] which he characterised as an unwarranted interference with the King's freedom of action. I maintained that they had constitutionally a right to be heard in matters where the personal act of the Sovereign might influence the political position of the country, but that they had *très-mal choisi leur cas.*

'*Spain and Portugal.*—The King of Portugal had, the Emperor said, *tout à fait gagné son cœur.* He is anxious for the union of Spain and Portugal under the King. On my saying, "*que nous ne voulions cela du tout,*" he said, "Yes, *je le sais bien ; Lord Clarendon n'en veut rien entendre, mais je ne désespère pas de le convaincre.*" I replied that it was contrary to the traditions of English policy—that I could not believe for a moment in its happy realisation. The Spaniards despised the Portuguese, and the Portuguese hated them in return. Should Spain become a province of Portugal, or Portugal of Spain? The Emperor called the mutual aversion exaggerated, and thought it quite feasible to tell the Portuguese, "*Je vous donne l'Espagne, et aux Espagnols, je vous donne le Portugal.*" I maintained, on the contrary, that an *éclaircissement* on that point would soon be asked for, and lead to immediate quarrel. Where should the capital be? As long as Madrid remained the capital, there was no hope of power for Spain, and certainty of increased poverty to Portugal. If Lisbon was chosen, it would soon make the kingdom very strong; both the dynasty and the capital, however, being chosen out of Spain, the whole centre of gravity was removed from it, which that proud nation would not put up with. If the attempt were made and failed, its failure would certainly bring ruin upon the poor King's dynasty in Portugal also.

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[2] The Ministry had resigned shortly before, in consequence of the King announcing his intention to visit Louis Napoleon at Boulogne.

'*Italy and Poland.*—The Emperor said, the last evening, he had only two other political wishes, the one to see Lombardy free from the mal-administration of Austria, the other to see Poland restored. He wanted to know my views on both these subjects. As to the first, I declared that nobody wished it more than myself for Austria's own sake; but there were two things we must remember, that Austria can never consent to the one:—the establishment of the principle that separate nationalities gave a right to independence, which would be the death-warrant of the whole monarchy; the other, her military frontier. She could not give up the line of the Mincio, and the campaigns of 1805 and 1809 prove that, if the passes of the Tyrol were turned, there is no military position except in the rear of Vienna. The Emperor objected that this still left a large portion of Italy in the hands of Austria. I defied him to trace another tenable boundary on the map. He replied, that if military frontiers were an essential point for the existence of States, France also had claim to one. My answer was, that France had the best military frontier, her flanks covered by neutral Switzerland and neutral Belgium. He denied that neutrality was a real protection, as it was rarely maintained in time of war. As to Italy, he would be glad if even the Milanese only could be freed. I told him Austria herself had, in 1848, offered to give it up in whatever form England pleased, provided she would obtain a peace for her in return. Lord Palmerston had refused to entertain anything of the kind, insisting upon Austria giving up the whole of her Italian kingdom. The Emperor had never heard of this before, but called it a capital blunder of policy.

'I asked him, when he spoke of Poland, what he meant by it? To go back to the first, or second, or third partition? He answered, he would be content with ever so small a nucleus, and perfectly so with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. He thought Galicia well governed, and the retention of both Austrian and Prussian Poland by these Powers as an essential feature in the scheme. He thought nothing would be so popular in France, England, and Germany. I agreed as to the two first, and particularly England, but expressed my doubt as to Germany. He maintained, he had been in Germany during the passing through of the Poles who fled their country after their revolution, and nothing could have exceeded the enthusiasm and national feeling for them. I could corroborate him as to the enthusiasm, but denied any *national* feeling. It was rather composed of hatred to Russian tyranny and general compassion for suffering patriots. Without the concurrence of Austria and Prussia there could be no hope for Poland.

'We had still one other discussion—on the *Schleswig-Holstein question*,—about which he confessed to the same ignorance which is common with English statesmen, and for the same reason, viz. the complication of the question, and the intolerably prolix and prosy manner in which the German publicists argued it. He was glad to receive from me a general condensed history of the whole transaction, and struck when I told him, that both he and his Government, as well as the English, had been made the mere tool of Russia on that question. . . .

'Upon the whole, the impression which my stay at Boulogne left upon me is, that naturally the Emperor would neither in home nor in foreign politics take any violent steps; but that he appears in distress for means of governing, and obliged to look about for them from day to day. Having deprived the people of every active participation in the government, and having reduced them to mere passive spectators, he is bound to keep up the "spectacle," and, as at fireworks, whenever a pause takes place between the different displays, the public immediately grows impatient, and forgets what it has just applauded, and that new preparations require time. Still he appears to be the only man who has any hold on France, relying on the "*nom de Napoléon*," which is the last thing left to a Frenchman's faith. He said to the Duke of Newcastle: "Former Governments tried to reign by the support of perhaps *one* million of the educated classes. I have tried to lay hold of the other *twenty-nine*."

'He is decidedly benevolent and anxious for the good of his people, but has, like all rulers before him, a bad opinion of their political capacity. He will be exposed to one danger in his attempt at governing solely by himself, which has befallen almost every absolute monarch—that he will be crushed under the weight of a mass of unimportant details of business, whilst the real direction of affairs may be filched from him by his irresponsible Ministers.

'On our drive to St. Omer, he was stopped by three couriers, who brought him different packets of despatches, which, after having read, he very kindly handed over to me for perusal. They were all police reports of different suspected persons, amongst them an analysis of Léon Faucher's last article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, which the writer wound up with the remark: "*Le reste n'est qu'une répétition de l'erreur populaire tant de fois répetée, que les finances d'un gouvernement absolu ne peuvent pas être en ordre.*" I could not but contrast the personal interest in such reports, and in his secret correspondence with private agents, with the indolence which prevents the attentive perusal of public documents, or even of the newspapers. His attachment to the Empress appears to be great. In the rank and position to which she has been elevated, she finds many enemies, and both long for a place of retirement in the South of France where they can live in privacy, and which Biarritz might become.

'The Emperor's best chance is the English alliance, which not only gives steadiness to his foreign policy, but, by predisposing in his favour the English press, protects him from the only channel through which public opinion in France, if hostile to him, could find vent. I told him that we should be glad to see him in England, and that the Queen would be delighted to make acquaintance with the Empress. He gave no direct answer, but the expression of his hope that we would come in return to Paris for the Exhibition next year, when the Louvre would be finished.'

What, on the other hand, was the impression produced by the Prince upon the Emperor? One of admiration from the first. 'The Emperor told me last night after the Prince had retired,' Lord Cowley writes (6th September) to Lord Clarendon, 'that he was more pleased than he could say with all that he had heard from his Royal Highness; that there was nothing so trying as making acquaintance, as it were, in public, but that the Prince had made it easy to him. . . I have endeavoured to ascertain what the Emperor says to others, and I can assure you that it is even more satisfactory than what he says to me.'

The combination in the Prince of courtesy, knowledge, sagacity, and fearless moral courage, seems to have exercised an irresistible charm upon the Emperor, and the warmth of this feeling is visible in the letter which he entrusted to the

Prince to deliver to the Queen. 'The presence,' it bore, 'of Your Majesty's estimable Consort in the midst of a French camp is a fact of the utmost political significance, since it demonstrates the intimate union of the two countries. But to-day I prefer not to dwell on the political aspect of this visit, but to tell you in all sincerity how happy it has made me to be for several days in the society of a Prince so accomplished,—a man endowed with qualities so seductive and with knowledge so profound. He may feel assured that he carries with him my sentiments of high esteem and friendship. But the more I have been enabled to appreciate Prince Albert, the more it behoves me to be touched by the kindness of Your Majesty in agreeing on my account to part with him for several days.'

Soon after Count Walewski's return to London he told Lord Clarendon, 'that the Emperor had spoken with enthusiasm of the Prince, saying that in all his experience he had never met with a person possessing such various and profound knowledge, or who communicated it with the same frankness. His Majesty added, that he had never learned so much in a short time, and was grateful.'

M. Walewski went more fully into the subject a few weeks afterwards with the Belgian ambassador, M. Van de Weyer, in a conversation of which the following record was preserved in a letter of M. Van de Weyer's at the time to the present King of the Belgians:—

'In my conversation with Count Walewski, we touched on certain points, which it was understood I was not to refer to in my official correspondence.

'"Great events," he said to me, "have taken place since we last met, and certainly not the least of these is the meeting of Prince Albert and the Emperor. I have not forgotten the opinion you have on several occasions expressed to me in speaking of the Prince, so that I am not speaking to one who has altered his views (*un converti*)." "The Prince," I said, interrupting him, "is in my eyes one of the highest intelligences of our time (*une des intelligences les plus supérieures de l'époque*)." "These," he rejoined, "are precisely, *identically*, the Emperor's words; had you heard him, you could not have expressed yourself in terms more nearly resembling his." "And," I added, "what completes the excellence of Prince Albert as a man, and as a politician, is that his heart and the straightforwardness of his character are on a level with his intelligence." "The Emperor," replied M. Walewski, "has been struck beyond measure with the depth and the justice of his views, and at my last audience the first words which he addressed to me were these: '*Savez-vous, Walewski, que j'ai un grand reproche à vous faire? C'est que vous ne m'avez pas assez souvent parlé du Prince Albert, que vous ne m'avez pas assez mis à l'avance en mesure de l'apprécier, et de connaître tout le poids qu'ont ses conseils en Angleterre, toute l'influence qu'il y exerce.*' I explained to the Emperor, how few opportunities diplomatists had at the Court of St. James's of becoming well acquainted with Prince Albert, whose extreme reserve, moreover, made any attempt to do so very difficult. Since our alliance, frequent communications have given me the means of forming a judgment; and I share in all points the feeling of the Emperor."

'"During a carriage drive of six hours we had an opportunity," added the Emperor, in speaking to Walewski, "of getting to the closest quarters, and of thoroughly discussing all the great questions. Prince Albert spoke to me with a frankness, a sincerity, an *abandon*, which produced a deep impression upon me. We even touched upon very delicate points, among others, the kind of prejudice, of personal repugnance, which existed towards me at the English Court. The Prince's answers were most satisfactory in every point of view. The very slowness with which he has to express himself in French is the result, not of an excessive prudence, but of the desire to leave nothing obscure or vague." "You may judge by these words," added M. Walewski, "how much the Emperor appreciates the Prince, and what confidence he has in him. Do you know what was the impression on his side which the Prince brought back with him from Boulogne?" "Away from official duty as I have been for the last six weeks," I replied, "I am completely in the dark as to what the world is saying on this subject, but I can *à priori* form an opinion for myself of what his impression was. The Prince, with his philosophical head and his gift of political insight, could not fail to comprehend and to rate at its true value the Emperor's calm, reflective, and positive mind.'' '

We shall have occasion hereafter to show that the better the Emperor of the French knew the Prince, the higher was his admiration for the qualities which he had recognised in him from the first. Writing on the 15th of August, 1857, to the Queen, after a short visit to Osborne, he spoke his conviction in a few words, which contain just such a panegyric as probably the Prince would most have coveted—'*Lorsqu'on a su apprécier les connaissances variées et le jugement élevé du Prince, on revient d'auprès de lui plus instruit et plus apte à faire le bien.*' Yes, this was the Prince's best encomium,—that it made all who came under his influence '*plus aptes à faire le bien.*'

CHAPTER LVII.

On the 15th of September the Court reached Balmoral. The new house there had been roofed in, and the Prince was well satisfied with the general effect of the building. The same day tidings were received by the Queen of the sailing of the Allied forces for the Crimea upon the 7th. Since the Spanish Armada sailed from Lisbon in 1588, no such fleet had covered the seas as that which had been mustered at Varna for this expedition; and, carrying as it did the flower of both the English and French armies on an enterprise surrounded with more than usual uncertainty, the anxiety may be imagined, with which further intelligence was looked for by the Queen and Prince. It came earlier than was expected. On the 21st a telegram from the Duke of Newcastle, dated at nine o'clock the previous evening, announced that 25,000 English, 25,000 French, and 8,000 Turks, had landed safely at Eupatoria, 'without meeting with any resistance,' and that they had at once begun to march on Sebastopol.[1]

Whilst all were flushed with this intelligence, Baron Stockmar arrived, the most welcome of guests, looking, the Prince notes, 'very well and cheerful.' Sir George Grey, who had accompanied the Queen to Balmoral as Minister in attendance, was laid up at Abergeldie from the effect of an accident; and Her Majesty was looking eagerly for the arrival of Lord Aberdeen, who had been ill, and, as Sir James Graham wrote, needed 'a change of scene, and some North-country air to raise his spirits and restore his drooping energy.' It was apparent that the severe strain of the last eighteen months had told so seriously upon his health, that, unless intermitted, it might become dangerous. On the 17th the Prince had written to him:—

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[1] The Duke received his information from the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, who had communicated a telegram from a private correspondent. The place of landing, it will be remembered, was at 'Old Fort,' some distance from Eupatoria.

'We hope very much that you will not delay your journey to Scotland too long, for ourselves, and on your own account. The news from Sebastopol cannot come so fast as one fancies, and for any decision to be taken with respect to what may take place, that may be done from here as well as from London. There remains then the only argument for your staying, that you would be abused for coming away. This is very likely, as abusing you is a large portion of the trade of the political public; but they will take any other ground, perhaps the very fact of your staying, in order to misrepresent the motive for it. As there is nothing real in it, however, it can do no harm. . . . London is really very unwholesome, and the mountain air will much refresh you.'

On the 22nd the Queen repeated, under her own hand, with increased urgency, her wish that Lord Aberdeen should seek the refreshment of his native air:—

'The good news of the landing of the troops in the Crimea will have given Lord Aberdeen sincere pleasure. The Queen must now very strongly urge upon Lord Aberdeen the necessity for his health of his coming at once to Scotland. The siege of Sebastopol may be long—and it is when Sebastopol is once taken, that the difficulties respecting what is to be done with it will arise—and then Lord Aberdeen's presence will be necessary in town. Besides, a week of our short three weeks' stay has already elapsed, and, if Lord Aberdeen delays longer, the reason for being near to the Queen (which he would be at Haddo) would no longer exist. The Queen must therefore almost insist on his coming speedily north, where he will in a short time take in a stock of health, which will carry him well through the next winter and session. . . . Lord Aberdeen knows that his health is not his own alone, but that she and the country have as much interest in it as he and his own family have.'

Reluctantly quitting his post at head-quarters in compliance with these representations, Lord Aberdeen came to Balmoral, where he arrived on the 27th, 'much fagged and depressed.' He remained, improving visibly during his brief stay, till the 30th, when he went to his own seat of Haddo in another part of Aberdeenshire. Scarcely had he done so, when a telegram from Lord Clarendon to the Queen announced, on the authority of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the successful issue of the attack of the Allied armies upon the Russian position at the Alma on the 20th of September. The same day brought another telegram, based on a report from Bucharest, that Sebastopol had fallen after an attack by sea and land. Had any due estimate been formed of the magnitude of the task which the Allied forces had set themselves, this second report could never have been treated as otherwise than most improbable. Yet in writing to the Queen (30th September), the Duke of Newcastle says: 'Confirmation of this blessed news will probably be received in the course of a few hours;' and even Lord Aberdeen, little apt as he was to be sanguine, admitted that he had brought himself to believe the report, notwithstanding 'the absurdities and exaggerations of the account.' In a letter to the Queen (1st October), after mentioning that the account of the victory on the Alma 'must be correct,' he expresses his opinion that the other report 'may possibly be so too. At all events, we may fairly hope that the fall of Sebastopol cannot long be delayed.' A few days' reflection modified this hopefulness of view, and on the sixteenth he again writes to the Queen: 'If the garrison of Sebastopol remains entire, a first blow only has been struck, which still leaves much to be done, and gives rise to great anxiety.' And in the same letter he refers to his personal remembrance of the fact, 'that at the time of the battle of Austerlitz the country was in ecstasy for three or four days at the report of a great victory obtained over the French, the truth of which was so fatally contradicted.'[2]

Meanwhile, what was to be done with Sebastopol, if taken, was a question which had engaged the attention of the Ministry ever since the attack upon it had been finally resolved on. Lord Aberdeen was of opinion that it should be completely destroyed, as otherwise it might become a cause of quarrel. Lord John Russell was only for razing the seaward defences. They both concurred in thinking that the Crimea, if taken, should not be given to the Turks—an opinion in which they were strongly supported by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who, as Lord Aberdeen says in writing (15th Sept.) to Lord Clarendon, 'has more than once deprecated the idea of any increase of territory in that quarter. He knows them too well.' The very opposite of these views, however, was at this time, and for some time afterwards, held by Lord Palmerston, his idea being that Sebastopol should not be destroyed, and that the Crimea should be added to the Turkish empire. Now that the fall of the great stronghold seemed to be imminent, Lord Aberdeen informed the Queen that he adhered to his first proposition for the immediate and entire destruction of the works.

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[2] It is due to Lord Clarendon to say that he did not share the general belief. In writing to the Queen (1st October), 'to congratulate Her Majesty upon the victory with which Her Majesty's arms have been crowned in the first encounter with the enemy,' he adds, with reference to the report of the fall of Sebastopol, 'The Russians cannot have experienced great loss in their superior position; and if 30,000 or 40,000 effected a safe retreat to Sebastopol, it is hardly credible that they should have surrendered the place in two days.' By the 5th of October it was known in England that the rumour was pure fiction, resting on no better authority than the statement of a Tatar, whose very existence was more than doubtful.

> ‘He did not see,’ he added, ‘the advantage of doing the thing by halves; while the destruction of the sea defences only might give rise to erroneous impressions, and would be of an equivocal character. The fall of Sebastopol would be, in fact, the conquest of the Crimea, and the Allies might winter there with perfect security, as by occupying the lines of Perekop, any access to the Crimea would effectually be prevented by land. Lord Aberdeen also thinks that with a view to peace, and the restitution of the Crimea to Russia, it would be more easy for the Emperor to accept the destruction of the fortifications when accomplished, than to agree to any stipulation having such an object. . . . The great objection to leaving the matter undecided appears to be the possibility of differences hereafter between France and England upon the subject. The Turks, too, might perhaps desire to have a voice in the matter, and might become troublesome.’

In acknowledging this letter next day, the Queen recorded her entire agreement ‘in the statesmanlike views’ expressed in it. Long before a decision had to be taken, events had settled the question very conclusively. For the time, however, the divergence of opinion on the subject in the Cabinet added to the home troubles of its chief. These were neither few nor slight. Lord John Russell was again urging the impossibility of going on with a Parliament which had shown itself so intractable, and complaining with others of want of vigour in the conduct of the war. The hopes of immense achievements in the Baltic had been disappointed. What was it, that the Russian fleet had been kept in durance, if it was still safe? What that Bomarsund had been taken, if Sweaborg and Cronstadt still frowned defiance to our ships? The fiery ardour of Sir Charles Napier, from which so much had been expected, had cooled, as many thought, without sufficient cause, and he was now engaged in a hostile controversy with the First Lord of the Admiralty, that contrasted unpleasantly with the same official's recent panegyric of the hero of Acre at the Reform Club dinner. In this correspondence each tried to throw upon the other the blame with which the public, as both had begun to feel, intended to avenge its disappointment for the failure of the extravagant expectations which had been raised.[3] Great dissatisfaction was also finding a voice in the journals—an echo of what was felt in the Black Sea fleet itself,—at the want of energy and spirit, which, but for the presence of these qualities in Sir Edmund Lyons in an unusual degree, might have made our operations there even more abortive. Demands arose within the Cabinet for the recall of Admiral Dundas—a step which, at such a critical moment, would certainly not have enhanced our prestige before our enemies or the world. Lord Raglan also was vehemently assailed, with how much consistency may be judged from the fact, that the same member of the

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[3] Sir Charles Napier, speaking at a dinner at the Mansion House in February 1855, made a vehement attack upon Sir James Graham, which he wound up with these words—'I state it to the public, and I wish them to know, that, had I followed the advice of Sir J. Graham, I should most inevitably have left the British fleet behind me in the Baltic.' This he undertook to prove before all the world—a pledge which he was never allowed, and would probably have found it hard to redeem. The attack was made in terms so unseemly that the Government were asked in the House of Commons a few nights afterwards (16th February), if they intended to take proceedings against the rebellious Admiral. 'He has proclaimed himself a hero,' was Sir James Graham's answer; 'but it is not my intention to allow the gallant officer to dub himself a martyr as well as a hero; and therefore it is not my intention to advise the Crown to take any further notice of the matter.' Replying to a taunt about his speech at the Reform Club, Sir James Graham remarked, on the same occasion, 'I underwent due correction in this House on the subject of that speech; since that correction was made, I hope I have improved in prudence.' The honour of Grand Cross of the Bath was offered a few months afterwards to Sir Charles Napier, but he declined it, stating in a letter to the Prince (6th July, 1855) as his reason for doing so, that having demanded a court-martial from the Admiralty to investigate his conduct, and this having been refused, 'he did not feel he could accept an honour till his character was cleared.'

Government, who had been urgent for his trial by a Court of Inquiry, became equally urgent a week afterwards, when news of the victory of the Alma reached England, that he should at once receive the honour of the Garter.

Meanwhile every day brought fresh tidings of the events of that memorable fight, when, in a few hours, the Russian army was driven from a commanding position, which Prince Menschikoff had pledged himself to the Czar to hold against the invaders for three weeks. On the 8th Lord Burghersh arrived in London, bearing despatches from Lord Raglan with the details of the battle. His report as to the Commander-in-chief, said the Duke of Newcastle, writing to the Queen the same day, was 'that never for a moment did Lord Raglan evince any greater excitement or concern than he shows on ordinary occasions. Never since the days of the Great Duke has any army felt such confidence in and love for its leader, and never probably did any general acquire such influence over the Allies, with whom he was acting.' To the same effect was the report, the day after the battle, of Brigadier General Hugh Rose (now Lord Strathnairn) to the Duke of Newcastle. 'As my duty,' he wrote, 'is to report to your lordship facts, I certainly ought not to omit an important one, which ensured the success of the day. I speak of the perfect calmness of Lord Raglan under heavy fire, and his determination to carry the most difficult position in his front, a feat in arms which has excited the universal admiration of the French army.'

What Lord Raglan himself had to report of the conduct of the troops was all that could be wished. Wasted for two months previously by the scourge of cholera which 'pursued them to the very battle-field,' 'exposed since they had landed in the Crimea to the extremes of wet, cold, and heat,' 'in the ardour of the attack they forgot all they had endured, and displayed that high courage for which the British soldier is ever distinguished; and under the heaviest fire they maintained the same determination to conquer as they had exhibited before they went into action.' But the feelings of triumph, with which a victory so brilliant was hailed within the Palace, were dashed with sadness at the thought of the price at which it had been bought. Accordingly we find the Queen writing to Lord Clarendon (10th October), that she 'fully enters into the feelings of exultation and joy at the glorious victory of the Alma, but this is somewhat damped by the sad loss we have sustained, and the thought of the many bereaved families of all classes, who are in mourning for those most dear to them.'

How eagerly the Prince studied every detail of what was passing in the Crimea during these eventful days, is shown by the care with which he accumulated whatever documents could bring most vividly into view every incident of importance. Among these, not the least interesting are letters from officers, written from their bivouacs, while the fever of the battle was still hot within their veins, and the bloody traces of the conflict were still before their eyes. To read such letters, with their records of daring and death, of privations uncomplainingly borne, and of manly gratitude for life and limb unhurt, stirs the heart strangely even after a long lapse of years. How must they have moved those who, like the Queen and Prince, were watching so intently every movement of the tremendous drama which had now begun! In all these letters the conduct of the troops—troops for the most part new to active service—is highly spoken of. Thus, for example, in one that is enriched by an admirable drawing of the ground over which the battle was fought, this passage occurs: 'The behaviour of the men has been beyond all praise, and I am confident, that having stood such a pounding as they did, their future success in any *possible* undertaking need not be doubted.'

The Prince was proud—he had good reason to be so—of the doings of his own regiment (1st Grenadier Guards), and he wrote to its commanding officer, Colonel Grosvenor Hood, as follows:—

'My dear Colonel Hood—I cannot resist writing you a line to express my admiration of the manner in which the battalion of my regiment under your command bore itself in that desperate fight at the Alma, and my pleasure and satisfaction at the fact, that upon the whole it suffered less in the action than the other battalions of our noble Brigade of Guards. I feel sure, that a good deal of this, as well as of the shock you were able to give the enemy, was owing to the judicious manner in which you re-formed your line under the bank of the river before advancing.[4] I am afraid you have all had to go through a good deal of hardship and privation, and that your labours will not yet be over; but I trust that the same spirit and courage which have enabled you hitherto to surmount every difficulty, will attend you to the end, and that the Almighty will continue to bless the efforts of our brave army in the East.

'Some additional reinforcements are going out immediately to keep your numbers full, but I am sorry to say the recruiting is going on very slowly. The Fusiliers and Coldstreams feel this still more, as they have only one battalion to draw upon for their reinforcements. Believe me always, &c.

'ALBERT.

'Windsor Castle, 17th October, 1854.'

Leaving Balmoral on the 11th of October, the Court reached Windsor Castle on the 14th, having halted at Edinburgh and Hull on the way. The object in visiting Hull was to inspect the docks there, and also those at

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[4] The successful operation here referred to is dwelt upon in Mr. Kinglake's work (vol. iii. p. 220, 6th edition). Colonel Hood was killed in the trenches at Sebastopol before this letter could have reached him.

Grimsby, of which the Prince had laid the first stone on the 18th of April, 1849.[5] At Edinburgh the Queen received intelligence that the idea of assaulting the north side of Sebastopol had been abandoned in deference to the views of General St. Arnaud, and that the army had made the celebrated flank march to Balaclava, and thereby secured a safe basis for future operations. It was not then known, that both Lord Raglan and Sir John Burgoyne had all along been favourable to the idea of attacking Sebastopol from the south, and that they were by no means insensible to the difficulties to be overcome before Sebastopol could be assaulted from the north. Despite what has been suggested to the contrary by the historian of the campaign, it would seem, that the line adopted by the Allies was due quite as much to this circumstance, as to the French Commander-in-chief's unwillingness to undertake the storming of the Star Fort which commanded the Belbek, and barred the advance upon the north side of the city.[6] Lord Raglan would otherwise scarcely have been diverted from his original intention of following up the success at the Alma by an immediate advance and assault of Sebastopol at the nearest point. That the Allies committed a mistake in not pursuing this course has since been maintained by the Russians themselves. Whether this was so or not, is one of those questions where much may be said on both sides, but which, by their very nature, admit of no certain conclusion. In the same category may be classed the question, whether they were not again mistaken in not at once delivering an assault when they reached the south side. Much controversy arose on both points, when it was seen, that, having lost their first opportunity for an assault, the Allied armies were compelled to prepare for a protracted siege. But, on the tidings of the flank march first reaching England, it was regarded as a masterly conception brilliantly carried out, while in fact it was simply a most hazardous venture, that owed its success to the lucky accident of the Russian army under Menschikoff having just before been withdrawn from Sebastopol, and carried beyond the line of march of the Allies.

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[5] See vol. ii. *ante*, p. 167.

[6] See Memorandum by Sir John Burgoyne, published by Major Elphinstone in the official account of the siege of Sebastopol, Part I. p. 107; also letters by Sir John Burgoyne published in his *Life and Correspondence by Lieut.-Col. Wrottesley, R. E.* London, 1873. Vol. ii. pp. 93 and 164.

The Russians were not slow to profit by the delay in the attack upon Sebastopol, and by the 24th of October our Government were in possession of disquieting information, that the difficulties of the siege were much more serious than had been anticipated. From Hull the Queen wrote the following letter to King Leopold :—

'Hull, 13th October, 1854.

'We are, and indeed the whole country is, entirely engrossed with one idea, one anxious thought, the Crimea. We have received all the most interesting and gratifying details of the splendid and decisive victory of the Alma. Alas! it was a bloody one. Our loss was heavy, many have fallen and many are wounded. But my noble troops behaved with a courage and determination truly admirable. The Russians expected their position would hold out three weeks. Their loss was immense; the whole garrison of Sebastopol was out. Since then the army has performed a wonderful march to Balaclava, and the bombardment of Sebastopol has begun. Lord Raglan's behaviour was worthy of the Old Duke's—such coolness in the midst of the hottest fire. . . . I feel so proud of my dear noble troops, who, they say, bear their privations, and the sad disease which still haunts them, with the greatest courage and good-humour.'

Meanwhile the negotiations with Austria for a concerted action were again marred by Prussia's declaration that, should Austria enter the field against Russia, she would consider herself absolved from the conditions of the defensive and offensive treaty which subsisted between Austria and herself. When this became known, the indignation roused against Prussia both in England and France was so great, that the Prince considered it expedient to call the attention of the Prince of Prussia (now Emperor of Germany), in the following letter, to the serious alienation between the countries likely to ensue from Prussia's perseverance in this line of policy:—

'The present moment is so critical, and seems to me to be so decisive for the future destiny of Prussia, that I cannot refrain from writing a few lines to you. I enclose (in strictest confidence) the copy of a letter, which I wrote to the King now two months ago.[7] Everything of which I there expressed myself apprehensive, has since then either proved true, or is in the way of becoming so. The feeling of soreness here and in France against Prussia is upon the increase, people regarding her as the only friend of Russia, and the only reason why an united Europe is unable to put a speedy stop to the war. Much blood, and of the best in England, has flowed, and men are in nowise different from beasts in this—if they have seen blood, they are no longer the same and are not to be controlled. Sinope swept us out of the career of diplomatic negotiations all at once into that of military demonstrations, and so on into war. The Alma and Sebastopol have obliterated the Eastern Question, and the cry is now for the annihilation of Russia. Already the talk in Paris is of the restitution of Poland, and this finds an echo in England; and in Boulogne the army, as I now hear, was in hopes to have to fight next year with Prussia.

'The danger of a general European war may probably be averted, if Austria joins our alliance *frankly and fairly*. Meanwhile to prevent this seems to be the main object of the present Prussian policy, because perhaps those who sway it feel, that they must soon either follow suit, or have to confront all Europe single-handed. The greater meanwhile the efforts are, which are demanded from France, the greater will be the claims which she will feel herself justified in putting forward at the end of the war; and the more thoroughly we shall have to bear the brunt of the conflict with France as our only ally, the more shall we be compelled to give our full support to these claims, however little in our hearts we may approve them. What other country, of which history tells, has ever had to pay smart-money like Prussia? And why was this, but because she was disunited, and out of sheer weakness pursued an ambiguous policy?

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[7] This was the letter cited above, p. 97.

'These are all apprehensions which press upon me, and which I could not refrain from imparting to you for what they are worth. I fear, moreover, that passion will lead to injustice, as the attacks of our press on Prussia already show that they provoke the same feelings and the same faults in Prussia; and, no doubt, before long, nations, which have every reason and every interest to maintain the warmest mutual friendship, will be misled into the foolish notion that they should in fact be enemies, and hate each other. For to be able to revile the King (take *The Times* for example) without pouring obloquy on the nation, is a feat too difficult for mortal ingenuity to accomplish.

'You will of course follow the operations in the Crimea with great interest, being a soldier, and knowing the contending armies so well as you do. Ours has shown great gallantry in storming the redoubt upon the Alma, and the flank march to Balaclava reflects the highest honour on whoever devised it. It is ascribed to Sir John Burgoyne,[8] and to the circumstance that the French shrank from attacking the redoubts on the Belbek, which lay on their line of march. Our army took the place of honour at the Alma, forming as it did the left wing, which was uncovered; it led the van upon the march, and is now once more, at the request of our Allies, the uncovered right wing of the besieging army south of Sebastopol. To Lord Raglan this request gives as much pleasure as a victory over the Russians. Most strange it is that the Russians at the Alma left all their wounded to their fate and to our mercy, that they brought no colours into action, and that the Emperor has not sent one of his sons to the army![9]

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[8] And with truth (see *ante*, p. 135, note 6). Sir John Burgoyne's reasons for attacking Sebastopol from the south, as given in his published correspondence, seem to be unanswerable; but, indeed, after yielding to the objections to

'Farewell! Say everything that is kind from me to your dear son, and think like a friend of your faithful kinsman,

'ALBERT.

'Windsor Castle, 23rd October, 1854.'

A few days brought intelligence which somewhat abated the high expectations raised by the success of the flank march. Profiting by the failure of the Allied armies to follow it up by an assault on Sebastopol, the Russians, who had been indefatigable in throwing up works of defence, had made their position so secure, that it was now beginning to be seen that a siege, and probably a protracted one, was inevitable. When the Allies opened fire on the 17th of October, the French batteries were silenced in a few hours, and the English guns had enough to do to hold their own against the vigorous fire of the Russian batteries. Reinforcements were pouring into the Crimea; the troops which had been withdrawn from the town were brought back, and the besiegers were themselves compelled to stand on the defensive;

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attacking the fort on the Belbek, what choice was left but to seek a base for operations at Balaclava and the other harbours south of Sebastopol?

[9] Before this letter was written two of them, the Archdukes Michael and Nicholas, were on their way to Sebastopol, where their arrival was signalised by the memorable attack on our lines at Inkermann on the 5th of November.

with the long nights coming on, and the rigours of winter, for which they were unprepared, staring them in the face. On the 31st of October a telegram through a Russian channel conveyed the tidings that General Liprandi had attacked the English detached camp at Balaclava on the 25th, with the startling result that four redoubts which covered the camp had been taken with their guns, and that the English had lost half their Light Cavalry under Lord Cardigan. Coming through such a channel, it was hoped the extent of the disaster might have been exaggerated; but after a few days of most painful suspense, this hope was dispelled by intelligence which reached the Government on the 4th of November. It was some days later before the full story was known of the battle of Balaclava, and of the fatal charge of the Light Brigade, from which only 195 men out of 673 returned.

Meanwhile the greatest anxiety prevailed throughout the kingdom, for although it could be seen even from the Russian telegram that the honours of the day remained with the English, these honours had been too dearly won by a portentous loss in the arm in which they were already too weak. In any case, it was certain that the Allied armies would find themselves taxed to the uttermost to meet the forces which the Czar was preparing to launch against them. The effect of the occupation of the Principalities by Austria had been to set free the Russian invading army, and to place it at the disposal of the Czar for use in the Crimea. It became, therefore, of the highest importance to engage her in active operations on the side of France and England, and by increasing in this way the pressure on Russia to strengthen the chances of an early peace. Moreover, if Austria continued to maintain a merely passive attitude, the chances were that France, indignant that the German Powers should throw upon herself alone with England the burden of repressing by force of arms the outrage perpetrated by Russia on public law and on the peace of Europe, which they had joined the Western Powers in reprobating in words, would seek before long to gratify her old ambition by attacking Austria in Italy and Germany on the Rhine. The voice of King Leopold, intimately related as he was with the Austrian Court through the marriage of his son with the Emperor's sister, might be presumed to have weight at Vienna in the present crisis. It was very natural, therefore, that the Prince, in the course of his regular correspondence with the King, should not hesitate to express his apprehensions, that the war, if protracted, would spread from Turkey to the centre of Europe; and he spoke out with his accustomed frankness in the following letter:—

'Dearest Uncle,— . . . . I can quite imagine that you should be greatly disquieted by the present state of politics, especially looking forward to the coming year. If the general war is to be averted, which may perhaps lead to a change of the cards of all Europe (as the current phrase goes), this can only be effected by Austria and Prussia going *frankly and fairly* (*aufrichtig*) hand in hand with the Western Powers, not for the purpose of shielding Russia from their hostility, which even you seem to dread may be carried too far, but in order to protect Europe from the serious dangers which would result from Russia being *compelled* to make peace. That a peace shall be concluded before Russia has sustained blows altogether different from those which we have hitherto been able to inflict on her, I cannot conceive, when I reflect not merely on the character of the Emperor Nicholas, but also on the political situation with respect to his own subjects, into which he has brought himself by the war. On the other hand, honour forbids us, and the very instinct of self-preservation forbids the Emperor Napoleon, to forbear from turning to account all the resources we can command to force him to terms. But, therefore, whether Sebastopol fall or not, there is not in my opinion the slightest hope that peace can be arrived at during the winter by way of advice or discussion, &c. &c., and I fear that those who set up this as their aim will do no good, and that they will only expose themselves to the risk of being misconstrued. To my mind the only practical question is, what will be the character of the war next year? Will it be carried on by United Europe against Russia, or by an Europe divided into two camps, on the Rhine and in Italy? That *we* cannot wish for the latter contingency admits of no doubt. But if it is to be averted, we must all do our best to bring about the other alternative. Oh, that the politicians of the Continent might be penetrated by this truth!

'You speak in your letter with unmistakeable bitterness of our French Alliance, which you call "uppermost in everything." And so it is, but simply because it is our only Alliance, and because both parties contribute equal sacrifices without reserve *pari passu* to the common object. That our regard is, as you observe, not reciprocated in France, may be true just at present. So it may have been at the outset of the war, but it is impossible that the armies of the two countries should share dangers and privations in common, and with so much devotion too, without this reacting upon the sentiments of the nations themselves; and the idea, which of late has been frequently expressed, "*que, seule, la France a été exposée à des revers, qu'alliée à l'Angleterre elle est invincible*," contains a certain satisfaction to the vanity of the French nation. For us the danger will no doubt be serious, should France play us false, and actually turn against ourselves the vast warlike preparations which we have joined her in developing; and there are not wanting people in France, to represent to the Emperor the risk he runs in making common cause with "*perfide Albion*," which may in the end play the traitor, and ally itself with his enemies;—but as men of honour neither he nor we can entertain such a thought for a moment.

'The longer Russia's resistance lasts, and the longer the struggle is devolved on France and England alone, the more compact must their alliance become. As, then, France and Napoleon are under all circumstances sure to cherish their traditional *arrières pensées* of territorial aggrandisement at their neighbours' expense, the risk, as far as these neighbours are concerned, certainly is, that England may some day have to stand by and see things done, which she herself cannot desire, but must uphold in the interest of her ally. This danger, I repeat, Austria, Prussia, and Germany may avert by acting with us, not in the manipulation of Protocols, which leave everything to the exertions of the Western Powers, and have no other object but to make sure that no harm is done to the enemy. Such a course is dishonourable, immoral, leads to distrust, and ultimately to direct hostility. Already the soreness of feeling here against Prussia is intense, nor can it be less in France. I have made the Prince of Prussia aware of my anxiety on this head.

' . . . We are in a state of terrible excitement about Sebastopol, as we get nothing but Russian news, and our own comes so late, and in such fragments, that it is difficult to make either head or tail of it. The want of cavalry is a terrible drawback to us. Nevertheless I have a firm conviction the city will fall before long.

'Windsor Castle, 6th November, 1854.'

The following day came intelligence that the redoubts lost on the 25th of October had been lost, not by English, but by Turkish soldiers, and that against the havoc in the Light Cavalry Brigade might be set a severe defeat previously inflicted on the Russian horse by our Heavy Cavalry.[10] But at the same time we heard of the attack made on the 26th on the English position at Inkermann. Gallantly although it had been beaten back by Sir de Lacy Evans, still, besides the present sacrifice of men, it showed the danger to which we were exposed from the superior numbers of the enemy—a danger of which a terrible illustration was to be given a few days afterwards in the deadly onslaught of the 5th of November. To add to our disquietude, despatches from Lord Raglan, dated the 20th of October, announced that his force was reduced to 16,000 men; that the siege was making very slow progress, and that it was doubtful whether he could keep his forces in the Crimea during the winter, even although Sebastopol should be taken. It was under the anxiety caused by this state of things that the following letter by the Queen to King Leopold was written:—

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[10] The public attention has always been so much drawn to the magnificent, but disastrous charge of the Light Brigade, that justice has scarcely been done to the splendid valour of our Heavy Cavalry Brigade at an earlier part of the same day. We cannot forbear from enriching our pages with the description of that great feat of arms by Colonel G. B. Hamley, a gentleman who combines in himself 'the scholar's, soldier's eye, pen, sword,' and who in a few vivid sentences brings the scene, as in a picture, before our eyes:—

'All who had the good fortune to look down from the heights on that brilliant spectacle must carry through life a vivid remembrance of it. The plain and surrounding hills, all clad in sober green, formed an excellent background for the colours of the opposing masses—the dark grey Russian column sweeping down in multitudinous superiority of numbers on the red-clad squadrons, that, hindered by the obstacles of the ground on which they were moving, advanced slowly to meet them. There was a clash and fusion, as of wave meeting wave, when the head of the column encountered the leading squadrons of our brigade, all those engaged being resolved into a crowd of individual horsemen, whose swords rose and fell and glanced. So for a minute or two they fought, the impetus of the enemy's dense column carrying it on and pressing our combatants back for a short space; till the 4th Dragoon Guards, coming clear of a wall which was between them and the enemy, charged the Russian flank, while the remaining regiment of the brigade went in, in support of those which had first attacked. Then—almost, it seemed, in a moment and simultaneously—the whole Russian mass gave way and fled, at speed and in disorder, beyond the hill, vanishing behind the slope some four or five minutes after they had first swept over it.'—*Edin. Rev.* vol. cxxviii. p. 408.

'Windsor Castle, 7th November, 1854.

'You must forgive my letter being short, but we are so much busied and occupied with the mails which have arrived, and the news from Sebastopol, that I have hardly a moment to write. We have but one thought, and so has the whole nation, and that is—Sebastopol. Such a time of suspense, anxiety, and excitement, I never expected to see, much less to *feel*. The feeling against Russia and the Emperor, who has to answer before God for the lives of so many thousands, becomes stronger and stronger as each mail brings the report of fresh victims of the obstinate resistance of the besieged. Peace is further distant than ever, and I fear the war will be a lengthened, and finally a general one. Austria could help its conclusion, if she would but act.'

We were still dependent exclusively on telegrams for our information as to the events of the 25th and 26th of October. These were of the most contradictory kind; but even when construed in the sense most favourable to ourselves, they were calculated to inspire the utmost anxiety, when coupled with the authentic intelligence from Lord Raglan of the low point to which our forces had been reduced on the 22nd of that month. So keenly did the Queen and Prince feel the necessity for strengthening the army, without an hour's delay, that the Prince wrote the following letter to Lord Aberdeen, pressing the subject on his attention:—

'My dear Lord Aberdeen,—This morning's accounts of the losses in the Crimea, &c., the want of progress in the siege, with an advancing adverse season and the army of the enemy increasing, must make every Englishman anxious for his gallant brothers in the field, and the honour of his country.

'The Government will never be forgiven, and ought never to be forgiven, if it did not strain every nerve to avert the calamity of seeing Lord Raglan succumb for want of means. We have sent out as many troops as this country can provide, leaving barely sufficient for the depôts to train and drill the men, who are to supply the vacancies caused by the exigencies of the service in the field of the regiments now out. But we have gone on in the beaten track of routine without any extraordinary effort. The recruiting does not keep pace even with the losses in the East, much less does it give us the augmentation required, as the recruits are mere boys, unfit for foreign service for two years to come. The Militia is *incomplete*, entirely composed of volunteers, of whom in some regiments more than half are not forthcoming from one time of training to the next. The volunteering for the Militia, instead of adding to the available force, has acted as a competition against the enlistment in the army !

'The time is arrived for vigorous measures, and the feeling of the country is up to support them, if Government will bring them boldly forward.

'The measures immediately wanted, according to my views, are :—

'Firstly. The immediate completion of the Militia by ballot, according to the law of the land, and the proper inspection and organisation of the same.

'Secondly. The obtaining the power for the Crown to accept the offers of Militia regiments to go abroad, and the relief of some of our regiments in the Mediterranean by these Militia regiments.

'Thirdly. The sending on of these relieved regiments to Lord Raglan.

'Fourthly. The obtaining the power for the Crown of enlisting foreigners.

'Fifthly. Immediate steps for the formation of foreign legions, to be attached eventually to Lord Raglan.

'Sixthly. A proclamation inviting Militiamen to volunteer into regiments of the Line.

'These measures might be taken on the responsibility of the Government, awaiting an Act of Indemnity, or might be laid before Parliament, convened for the purpose. Pray consider this with your colleagues.

'The Queen would wish you to come down here this evening to stay over-night. The Duke of Newcastle will be here, and we should like to talk these matters over with you.—Ever yours truly.

'Windsor Castle, 11th November, 1854.'

This letter was read by Lord Aberdeen to the Cabinet the same day; but they were opposed, as we learn from the Prince's Diary, to the proposal to raise a foreign legion, and to the completion of the Militia by ballot. The Prince, however, it was quickly shown by the progress of events, had formed a juster estimate of the exigencies of the case, and of the means of meeting them, which were within our reach. Within a few weeks every one of his suggestions had to be adopted, and in the short session of Parliament at the end of this year measures were passed, but not without vehement opposition, to authorise the raising of a Foreign Legion, and to enable the Government to send the Militia to the stations in the Mediterranean, and so to make the regiments there available for service in the Crimea.[1]

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[1] How true the Prince's forecast of the necessity for these measures had been, may be judged from a letter of Lord Palmerston's (then Premier) to Lord Panmure (then Secretary for War), on the 10th of June, 1855:—'We are 40,000 men short of the number voted by Parliament. . . . Let us get as many Germans and Swiss as we can; let us get men from Halifax; let us enlist Italians; and let us forthwith increase our bounty at home without raising the standard. Do not let departmental, or official, or professional prejudices and habits stand in our way. The only answer to give to objectors on such grounds is, the thing *must* be done; we *must* have troops.'—*Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 98.

Despatches from Lord Raglan down to the 28th of October, with the full story of the memorable events of the 25th and 26th, reached England on the 12th of November. In a private Despatch to the Duke of Newcastle, written on the former of those days, Lord Raglan adds some interesting particulars :—

> 'You will hardly be prepared,' he writes, 'for the bad conduct of the Turkish troops, which showed no fight whatever, and abandoned works without the attempt to defend them, which, though paltry enough, I am assured were superior to Arab Tabia [at Silistria], that a handful of men held so long against all the efforts of Gortschakoff's army; and thus they lost us seven guns of position, which I thought would be safe in their hands, at least for some hours. To contrast their conduct with that of our own people, it is worthy of mention that in each of the redoubts we had one single artilleryman to show the Turks how to use our guns. This man spiked the guns in the works, with one exception, alone and single-handed, whilst the Turks abandoned their duty and left him to shift for himself.
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> 'But you will be much more shocked to see the loss sustained by our Light Cavalry. This, indeed, is a heavy misfortune, notwithstanding the brilliancy of their conduct, and I feel it most deeply.'

Lord Raglan then gives his own account of how the order sent to Lord Lucan which led to the catastrophe came to be misapprehended—a subject afterwards of painful controversy. 'Fatal mistake!' he concludes. 'My only consolation is the admirable conduct of the troops, which was beyond all praise.'

In another private Despatch Lord Raglan tells the Duke of Newcastle that what he wanted at the moment was troops of 'the best quality. Ten thousand men would make us comfortable. As it is, the Divisions employed are overworked, and of necessity scattered over a too extensive position, and we are enabled, and that with difficulty, to give but one British Brigade, the Highlanders, for the defence of Balaclava, assisted, however, by marines and sailors, and a French Brigade.'

The accounts from General Canrobert as to the dwindling away of the British force, on which the stress of the Russian attack had hitherto exclusively fallen, had aroused the apprehensions of the Emperor of the French. He determined at once on sending large reinforcements to the Crimea, and expressed in person to our Ambassador in Paris the hope that England would help him with ships, as he was ready to send out every man he had. He had already employed every disposable ship, including his own yacht; and he wished the steam fleet to be recalled from the Baltic, and employed for purposes of transport. Everything, he urged, must be done to avert the risk of a misadventure in the East.

Happily the English Government were in a position to meet the demand for ships, and on the 12th of November Sir James Graham was able to assure the Queen, that English transports were already on their way from the Black Sea to Toulon to embark French troops, and that an additional fleet of steam transports would be sent to Toulon from England, which would embark 8,000 men there before the 10th of December. In fact, provision had already been made for despatching 6,000 English and 20,000 French troops, to arrive in the Crimea before Christmas. Provision had also been made for housing and clothing the men for the winter, through which it was now too probable the siege would be prolonged. Huts, as Lord Hardinge wrote to the Prince, to house 20,000 men had been ordered, and in the same letter (20th November) he spoke of large stores of warm clothing, great coats, and blankets, as having been 'already sent out and received.' Had they reached their destination, they would, no doubt, have been ample to keep at bay the rigours of the Crimean climate. But owing to a disastrous combination of circumstances they did not do so; and for many weeks afterwards the English newspapers that reached the camp and spoke of warm clothing, supplies of fuel, extra articles of diet and medical comforts, as having been provided for the troops, seemed a mockery to the poor fellows, who, with scanty rations and in threadbare and tattered clothes, were enduring the most cruel fatigues, aggravated by all the inclemencies of wind and rain, and snow and cold, upon the bleak heights of the Tauric Chersonese.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Had any stimulus been needed to enforce the necessity for sending reinforcements with the utmost despatch to the diminished ranks of the Allies, it would have been supplied by the tidings which reached France and England by telegraph on the 13th of November. An English telegram told of an attack made on the 5th by the Russians with very superior forces on the right of the English position,— of a battle which raged with great severity from before daybreak till late in the afternoon. It spoke of the Russians as having been driven back with enormous loss, estimated at from 8,000 to 9,000 men, but it also told that the English loss had been very great. This was confirmed by a telegram from General Canrobert, communicated by the French Government, which admitted that 'the brilliant feat of arms,' accomplished by 'the remarkable solidity with which the English army maintained the battle, supported by a portion of General Bosquet's division,' had not been achieved 'without some loss to the Allies.' How great the proportions of the struggle had been was manifest from the fact, at the same time announced, that it had been waged with the whole Russian army at Sebastopol, augmented by vast reinforcements hurried up from the Danube and the Southern provinces, and animated by the presence of the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael. Days were to elapse before a telegram from Lord Raglan explained the full cost at which victory had been purchased,[1] and the first feeling throughout the country was less that of elation at a great victory, than of anxiety for the gallant remnant of the men by whom it had been won.

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[1] The English loss was, including officers, 2,573 men killed and wounded; the French loss was 1,800 in killed and wounded. The Russian loss has

On the day the first telegrams were received, the Prince's Diary contains the following entry: 'Great excitement in the country, universal outcry for reinforcements, every available man ought to be sent.' What men were and were not available he seems to have known from the records of the strength of both our warlike establishments, which he compiled for the Queen's use, and he lost not an hour in putting his views before the Duke of Newcastle in the following letter:—

'My dear Duke,—The last accounts of the 6th make us naturally fear that Lord Raglan's force must have been reduced much further, and every nerve ought to be strained to reinforce him. I see from the comparative statement of the establishments at home and abroad, that we have the 18th, 51st, 54th, 66th, 71st, 72nd, 80th, 82nd, 90th, 91st and 94th at home. Some of these may be mere skeletons; the 90th is under orders; but is there no other fit for foreign service? The 18th, of which a portion is here, seems complete, and is most anxious to be sent out. What can be sent should be, and without the loss of a day! There are also 600 marines at Portsmouth unemployed, and some of the screw line-of-battle-ships might go empty with the troops, take the armament out of the sailing ships at the Crimea, and send these empty home. This may not be according to dockyard routine, but nevertheless may be feasible. Pray, don't leave a stone unturned! Ever yours truly.

'Windsor Castle, 13th November, 1854.'

This letter crossed communications from both Lord Aber-

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been variously computed by English authorities from 15,000 to 20,000. The Russian official reports, however, place it at 11,959 in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

deen and the Duke of Newcastle to the Queen, informing Her Majesty of arrangements which had been made by the Cabinet that day for the relief of the English forces in the Crimea. An active correspondence ensued between the Duke, Lord Hardinge, and the Prince, as to the strength of the reinforcements to be sent, and the regiments from which they were to be taken. The Prince, remembering doubtless Lord Raglan's desire to have the best troops, laid great stress upon filling up as far as possible the gaps which had been made in the regiments of the Guards. 'Pray,' he wrote to Lord Hardinge (16th November), 'let the rule of your measure be, to send out everything that is effective in the Guards, as that is what is really wanted. . . . The battles fought must have cost them 150 each, leaving 350 in the ranks. If not strongly reinforced, they are as battalions useless. Whatever is done, however, I repeat my hope, that an immediate decision will be come to and no time lost.'

The Prince might well urge the utmost despatch, for a telegram received that morning from Lord Raglan bore that our losses had been 'very great.' Three general officers, Sir George Cathcart, General Strangways, and General Goldie, had been killed, and another, General Torrens, had been dangerously wounded. All were men of the highest distinction, and their loss was most serious. Amidst the prevailing anxiety, the Prince continued to maintain his confidence in the ultimate success of the enterprise, and did his best to inspire others with his own feeling. 'It is cheering,' the Duke of Newcastle writes to him (16th November), 'that your Royal Highness keeps up your spirits in the circumstances of the present most anxious and trying times, and most devoutly I trust that the grounds of hope—I dare not say confidence—explained by your Royal Highness, may prove to be sure and safe.' That the victory gained by the Allies was a substantial one, could not be doubted, and it was hoped that the gigantic effort which had been made against them would not readily be renewed. If we had learned from the events of the day to measure our enemies' strength more accurately than before, they on the other hand had learned that mere weight of numbers was of small account against an adversary, who seemed to grow in strength the heavier the odds against him. By this time, too, considerable reinforcements from France and England must have reached the Crimea, and we should be in a better position to meet any fresh assault on our position.

Hitherto the honour of Field-Marshal had been withheld from Lord Raglan, in the daily hope of the fall of Sebastopol, but it was thought by the Government that the opportunity afforded by this last action, the brunt of which had fallen on the British troops, was a good one for testifying the nation's recognition of his services. In this view, communicated by Lord Aberdeen to the Queen (17th November), Her Majesty next day expressed her entire concurrence, transmitting to him at the same time the following letter by herself to Lord Raglan, to be forwarded to him, after being read by Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle:—

'Windsor Castle, 18th November, 1854.

'The Queen has received with pride and joy the telegraphic news of the glorious but, alas! bloody victory of the 5th. These feelings of pride and satisfaction are, however, painfully alloyed by the grievous news of the loss of so many generals, and in particular of Sir George Cathcart, who was so distinguished and excellent an officer.

'We are most thankful that Lord Raglan's valuable life has been spared, and the Queen trusts that he will not expose himself more than is absolutely necessary. The Queen cannot sufficiently express her high sense of the great services he has rendered and is rendering to her and to the country, by the very able manner in which he has led the bravest troops that ever fought, troops whom it is a pride to her to be able to call her own.

'To mark the Queen's approbation, she wishes to confer on Lord Raglan the Baton of Field-Marshal. It affords her the sincerest gratification to confer it on one who has so nobly earned the highest rank in the army, which he so long served in under the immortal hero, who, she laments, could not witness the success of a friend he so greatly esteemed.

'Both the Prince and Queen are anxious to express to Lord Raglan their unbounded admiration of the heroic conduct of the army, and their sincere sympathy in their sufferings and privations so nobly borne.'[2]

Another duty, which the Queen felt to be no less incumbent on her, was discharged the same day. It was to address a letter of sympathy to the widow of General Cathcart. No one, who had fallen on that fatal 5th of November, was so deeply regretted by the Queen and Prince as this distinguished officer. Returning to England from the Cape, where he had brought a difficult war to a successful close, he had gone out at once to the Crimea, landing there in the same battered uniform which he had worn throughout the Caffre war. His experience, genius, and energy, had designated him as a man most likely at no distant date to have the command in chief. In fact, he had been selected by the Government as Lord Raglan's successor in case of emergency, and took out with him to the Crimea a dormant Commission for the purpose. This Commission he had accepted with reluctance. Carrying him as it did over the heads of his seniors in the service, he knew that it must place him in an invidious position towards them. But as he could not regard it otherwise than in the light of a command from his Sovereign, he conceived that no choice was left him but to accept it. When therefore the Government subsequently decided on recalling the Commission, he felt greatly relieved. Only ten days before he fell he had placed it in the hands of Lord Raglan, who, in writing to the Duke of Newcastle (27th October), speaks of General Cathcart's conduct throughout the affair as having been 'exactly what might be expected from a man of his high feeling.'[3] *The Times* (18th November), in an eloquent commentary on the dearly-bought victory of Inkermann, speaks of him as 'that rare and precious character in the British service—a soldier devoted to the science and experienced in the practice of his profession. There was nothing which might not be expected from him, and, with such as he to fall back upon, there was no fear that the army would ever be at a loss for commanders. He now lies, one of thousands, slain by a chance bullet in the tempest of war.'

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[2] In returning this letter, which the Queen sent to Lord Hardinge to read, he mentions that he considered the time selected for conferring this dignity on Lord Raglan to be most opportune. 'It stands forth, as it should do, by itself, and conferred after such brilliant successes, is a compliment to that army which he so ably led.'

Writing to his widow (18th November), the Queen said: 'I can let no one but myself express to you all my deep feelings of heart-felt sympathy on this sad occasion, when you have been deprived of a beloved husband, and I and the country of a most distinguished and excellent officer. I can attempt to offer no consolation to you in your present overwhelming affliction, for none but that derived from reliance on Him who never forsakes those who are in distress can be of any avail; but it may be soothing to you to know, how highly I valued your lamented husband, how much confidence I placed in him, and how very deeply and truly I mourn his loss! Sir George died, as he had lived, in the service of his Sovereign and his country, an example to all who follow him.'[4]

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[3] See correspondence quoted by Mr. Kinglake, *The Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. v. cap. iii., 6th edition.

On the 22nd of November, Lord Raglan's Despatches reached England with full details of a battle 'unsurpassed in the annals of war for persevering valour and chivalrous devotion,' as it was truly called by the Duke of Newcastle, in the Despatch to Lord Raglan (27th November), which conveyed the Queen's acknowledgments to the army. Many letters from the English camp were forwarded to the Queen and Prince by those to whom they were addressed, and have been carefully preserved by him among his records of that memorable day. As a specimen of the stirring pictures with which they abound, we give the following extract from a letter to Sir George Couper, by an officer not actually engaged in the battle, but who, being on outpost duty in a redoubt, saw, as he says, a good deal of the fighting :—

'As I was not engaged, I think I may say that the behaviour of the men and officers of the Guards was magnificent. I cannot imagine anything more magnificent than the scanty and unsupported line of skirmishers (for they were extended to fill the space) driving that dense mass of Russians back over the hill, not once, but many times, and with fresh foes. It was a beautiful sight, and one I shall not forget. When our men's ammunition failed, they fought with the bayonet, and butt-end, and even with stones.

'In this scrambling, desperate fight, every man fought "for his own hand," like Hal o' the Wynd, and Grenadiers, Coldstreams, and Fusiliers got mixed together in the mêlée. Our officers could do little more than join in with their swords and revolvers; and our men, often surrounded by the Russians, fought their way out as best they could. Generalship there could be none whatever. British steadiness and bulldog courage did it. The result was to be seen next day in the fearful mass of Russian dead, which plainly told that it required something more than numbers to beat British soldiers. Our battalion had only about 350 men engaged. They fired 20,000 rounds, and more than half of them were killed or wounded.

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[4] As a mark of regard to Sir George Cathcart's memory, the Queen appointed his daughter, the Hon. Emily Cathcart, Maid of Honour to Her Majesty in 1855, and in this capacity she continues to be attached to the Court.

'It seems that two of the Emperor's sons had just arrived with a reinforcement of about 40,000 men, and joined the Russian army: hence their desperate attempt to force through our lines, and drive us out of the country.[5] I hear it said that the English loss is about 2,000, and the Russian 10,000 men. Certainly there are heaps of Russian dead *in every direction*, and we have got a great many prisoners, and a great many of their wounded. Fancy the Russians throwing shells at our fatigue parties who were burying their dead! I think we ought to take some notice of their uncivilised behaviour. I rather think the Zouaves will pay them back in their own coin. Even *our* men are getting savage about it.

'I can now describe a Russian soldier accurately: an individual with a long dirt-coloured great-coat and greasy forage cap, with still more tallowy complexion, "an impassive countenance, and an eye gleaming with the mixed expression of fox-like cunning and cur-ish abjectness." When I have been giving water and biscuit to a wounded Russian, I have seen that expression. One Russian, however (a better-looking fellow), to whom I was giving some assistance yesterday, looked much surprised, and raising himself on his elbow, kissed my hand repeatedly. That is not usual, though, for I think they would generally take the opportunity to stab us, did we not (profiting by experience) always take the precaution of first removing all their weapons.'

Many complaints were raised, upon authority that could not be impugned, of the barbarous disregard here mentioned of the usages of modern warfare shown by the Russians in their treatment of wounded adversaries. This, it seemed, had been carried to an extreme pitch upon the day of Inkermann. On the other side it was retorted, that the Russians had been exasperated by the barbarities of the Turkish irregulars whom they had encountered on the Danube, and by instances of English prisoners having used concealed revolvers to shoot down their captors. Isolated cases of such treachery may have occurred; but a simpler and more probable explanation can surely be found in the character of the men who formed the bulk of the Russian army, hurried as they were into battle after a long and exhausting journey, frenzied, as is now known, with drink, and fired with religious wrath against an enemy, who, they were told, had desecrated their churches at Balaclava and elsewhere in the neighbourhood by converting them into magazines, barracks, and stables. The passions of the battle-field need no incentive, and every officer must have looked forward with dismay to the bloody reprisals which were sure to be provoked by the slaughter of the helpless and the wounded, of which so many ghastly tales were told throughout the Allied camp on the morrow of that eventful day. In writing to King Leopold, the Queen speaks of the reports which had reached England on the subject, with warm indignation:—

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[5] This tallied with authentic information of which the Government had been for some time in possession, that the Czar had sworn not to rest until he had driven the Allies on board their ships, and that troops were marching on the Crimea with this object from all directions. The English appeared to be the particular objects of the Czar's indignation, and he had ordered Prince Menschikoff to attack them in preference to the French, if practicable, and to give them no rest.

'Windsor Castle, 28th November, 1854.

'Since I wrote we have received all the details of the bloody but glorious action of Inkermann: 60,000 Russians defeated by 8,000 English and 6,000 French, is almost a miracle. The Russians lost 15,000. They behaved with the greatest barbarity; many of our poor officers who were only slightly wounded were brutally butchered on the ground. Several lived long enough to say this.

'When poor Sir G. Cathcart fell, mortally wounded, his faithful and devoted military secretary (Colonel Charles

Seymour), who had been with him at the Cape, sprang from his horse, and with one arm—he was wounded in the other—supported his dying chief, when three wretches came and bayoneted him. This is monstrous, and requisitions have been sent by the two Commanders-in-chief to Menschikoff to remonstrate. . . .'

A few days later the Queen recurs to the subject in another letter to the same correspondent. 'The atrocities,' Her Majesty says, 'committed by the Russians on the wounded are too horrible to be believed. General Bentinck, whom we saw on the 29th, said that it was a disagreeable kind of warfare, as it was with people who behaved like savages.' It was upon full proof of the truth of this, elicited in a Court of Military Inquiry, that the remonstrance mentioned by the Queen had been addressed to Prince Menschikoff. While repudiating the charge as generally true, Prince Menschikoff admitted that individual instances of such brutality 'in the heat of combat' might have occurred. He then went on to vindicate the conduct of his men as having been provoked by a religious sentiment. They had learned that the Church of St. Vladimir, near Quarantine Bay, which was very holy in their estimation, had recently been pillaged by the French; and thence, as Mr. Kinglake says, 'he went on to conclude that if any of the French or the English had been despatched on the battle-field while lying disabled by wounds, they must have owed their fate—not to the ruthlessness, but—plainly to the outraged piety of the troops' (*Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. vi. p. 471). Well-founded or not, the defence was at least ingenious; but, if this were a specimen of how Holy Russia read the teachings of Christ, was it for the welfare of mankind that she should supersede the rule of Islam? [6]

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[6] The appeals of the Russian Generals to 'the piety' of their men took the very reprehensible form of denouncing—as only the self-styled pious do—

But the defence, such as it was, could not be set up for the Russian artillery fire being directed, as it was upon more than one occasion, on English and French soldiers, when they were engaged in bringing help, not to their own, but to the Russian wounded. A signal instance of this occurred after the battle of the Tschernaja, on the 16th of August, 1855. While the Russians were still in the act of retreating from the battle-field, the French set actively to work to collect the Russian wounded, and to lay them out in an open space to wait the arrival of the ambulances. While occupied in this task, the Russians, who could see plainly how they were engaged, suddenly opened fire from their guns upon them, heedless of the destruction they were pouring upon their own countrymen.[7] *The Times*' correspondent, who was upon the spot, thus reports the answer of a Russian soldier, who was limping along with deep flesh wounds in both his thighs, to the question what he thought of the behaviour of his friends in firing among their own wounded: 'They are accustomed to beat us when we are with them; no wonder they try to ill-treat us when we are upon the point of escaping from their power!' Warfare conducted in a spirit at once so ignoble and so short-sighted was foredoomed to disaster and defeat.

As the tragic events of this terrible war were more and more developed, more and more keenly was it felt, that all its miseries and carnage might have been prevented, had the German Powers gone heart and hand with those of the West

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their adversaries as 'godless.' A notable example of this occurred in Prince Gortschakoff's order of the day after the unsuccessful assault of the 18th of June, 1855, upon Sebastopol, where he called upon his troops to 'plant as heretofore their manly hearts against the deadly shots of *the godless enemy*.'

[7] The French, General Bernard wrote to Colonel Phipps, two days after the battle, 'took in 1,800 of the Russian wounded, but were obliged to leave crowds out, because the Russians opened a heavy fire on their parties engaged in this merciful and Christianlike duty.'

in telling Russia that, if she persisted in her aggression on Turkey, she would have to meet them also in the field. In the letter of the 28th, above quoted, the Queen gives expression to this feeling in the following passage:—

> 'If Austria did her duty she might have prevented much of this bloodshed. Instead of this, her Generals do nothing but *chicaner* the Turks of the Principalities, and the Government shuffles about, making advances and then retreating. We shall see now if she is sincere in her last propositions.'

Better hopes were at this moment awakened that Austria would act. A project of a treaty with England and France had been submitted by her to their respective governments, and was at this moment under consideration. In presenting it, Austria asked to be informed what other conditions, beyond those which were afterwards so well known as the Four Points,[8] were to be insisted on by England and France. If these were approved by Austria, she would then send an Ultimatum to St. Petersburg, the rejection of which would constitute a *casus belli*. The demand was not unreasonable, as Austria was entitled to know how far and to what she

[8] The Four Points were:—1. Russian Protectorate over the Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia to cease; the privileges granted by the Sultan to these provinces to be placed under a collective guarantee of the Powers. 2. Navigation of the Danube at its mouths to be freed from all obstacle, and submitted to the application of the principles established by the Congress of Vienna. 3. The Treaty of the 13th of July, 1841, to be revised in concert by all the high contracting parties in the interest of the balance of power in Europe, and so as to put an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea. 4. Russia to give up her claim to an official protectorate over the subjects of the Sublime Porte, to whatever rite they may belong; and France, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia to assist mutually in obtaining from the Ottoman Government the confirmation and the observance of the religious privileges of the different Christian communities, and to turn to account, in the common interests of their co-religionists, the generous intentions manifested by the Sultan, at the same time avoiding any aggression on his dignity and the independence of his Crown.

pledged herself by joining with the Allies. But, as matters stood in the Crimea, it was difficult for them to specify on what precise terms they would make peace. They might ask too much, or too little; and if they were supposed to be parties to the Austrian Ultimatum, this would give them the appearance of suing for peace, and of being disheartened by recent events. Much might depend on the answer returned to Austria; and it is significant of the value which the Cabinet had by this time learned to attach to the judgment of the Prince on questions of foreign policy, that Lord Clarendon wrote to him (19th November), asking for his opinion, previous to a meeting of the Cabinet next day to deliberate on the subject.

Within a few hours the following exhaustive Memorandum by the Prince was in Lord Clarendon's hands:—

'Windsor Castle, 19th November, 1854.

'The difficulties which we meet with in having to answer the question put by a Foreign Power, as to what are the ulterior conditions on which alone we should be prepared to make peace, are inherent to every negotiation for peace whilst war is going on. They are twofold.

'1st. The uncertainty of the events of the war, during which a State has to pronounce itself as to its views, which makes it possible that its demands may turn out to have been too high or too low—as, under success, they could not be raised with good faith, and, without success, they could not be lowered with honour.

'2nd. The real cause and ultimate object of the war itself.

'Against the first difficulty there is no remedy, except stating the most moderate terms, and keeping open the right to advance others, if the war proceeds. This we have done in the Notes exchanged with Austria in August last, and she has acknowledged the principle in her answer, claiming its benefit for herself.

'With regard to the second, it generally so happens that the *ostensible cause* of a war does not embrace *the whole or even the strongest motives* which impel States to resort to that last extremity.

'A peace, to be satisfactory and lasting, must satisfy all the objects for which the war has been undertaken, and it becomes necessary therefore *fully and honestly* to consider what these were.

'In the present instance I take them to have been, the *necessity* which Europe (or at least England and France on its behalf) found itself under, to put a term at last to a policy which threatened the existence of the Ottoman Empire, and by making all the countries bordering on the Black Sea dependencies of Russia, seriously to endanger the balance of power,—a policy, of which the particular steps which led to the present war can be considered only as symptoms. The question naturally arises,—By what means was that policy to be carried out?

'The means employed are:

'1st. The identity of religion between Russia and the Greek subjects of the Porte—the assumption of a spiritual supremacy by the Emperors of Russia over the whole Greek Church, and, based upon this, a *political protectorate* over the Christians in Turkey, supported by different treaties obtained by violence, and purposely ambiguously worded.

'2nd. The exclusion of all European commerce from the Black Sea, by the shutting up of the mouths of the Danube.

'3rd. The erection of a stupendous military and naval establishment at Sebastopol, containing a fleet, which, having no commerce to protect and no enemy to guard against, can only serve purposes of aggression.

'4th. The gradual transfer of the allegiance of the provinces separating Turkey from Russia from the former to herself, partly by treaty stipulations, partly by violent occupations, by bribery and any other surreptitious means.

'5th. The subjection of the mountain tribes of the Caucasus under pretence of maintaining order.

'If these are the means by which Russia hopes to succeed *in a policy detrimental to Europe*, no peace can be admitted by us which does not give the *fullest* guarantees against them.

'These guarantees are, in my opinion, all contained in the well-known "Four Points." We have, therefore, not to ask at present anything beyond the "Four Points," but rather to *define more fully* the precise meaning we attach to their elastic terms. In doing this, care should be taken not to fall short of any of the expectations which the Government led Parliament to entertain, when Lord John Russell stated on its behalf to the House of Commons the objects of the war. I find that the impossibility of allowing Russia to retain her threatening armaments in the Crimea was one of the most prominent, and the one which gave most satisfaction to the House. Now that vast treasure, and the best English blood, have been profusely expended towards obtaining that object, the nation has a right to expect that any peace contemplated by Government should fully and completely realise it.

'If, therefore, our present demands consist strictly in a *closer definition and more extensive application* of the principles contained in the "Four Points" in the sense above understood, Parliament ought to be satisfied, and Austria can derive from them no pretext to fly from her engagements towards us.'

With this document before them to guide their deliberations, the decision of the Cabinet was made comparatively easy. The subject, however, engaged their consideration on two consecutive days, and on the 21st Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Queen:—

> 'The Cabinet yesterday and to-day was occupied in the consideration of the answer to be given to the Despatch of Count Buol to Count Colloredo, requesting explanations from the Allied Powers previous to the signature of the proposed Treaty between them and Austria. The answer contained in a Despatch to Lord Westmoreland has been mainly founded upon an excellent Memorandum by the Prince to Lord Clarendon, which appears to embrace the whole subject, and to take a perfectly just view of the position of the different parties.'

Some misgivings were entertained by Lord Clarendon and others of the Ministry, that Austria, in asking for the explanations she did, was seeking a pretext for extricating herself from her subsisting engagements to the Allies. This view was not, however, shared by the Queen or Prince, and in returning to Lord Clarendon the draft of his Despatch, Her Majesty wrote: 'It contains an honest exposition of our position and views, which is always the best, where some double dealing is suspected on the part of those with whom we treat. The Queen must confess, however, that the steps taken by Austria, and the proposals now made by her, admit of the more natural interpretation of being honestly meant; that is to say, the Queen fully believes, that Austria would still prefer to see Russia entering into negotiations for peace to having to fight her; but she evidently cannot stand the strain of the suspense much longer, and the Treaty and Notes will make it easy for her to go to war, if necessary, and at the same time they bring the term for the decision as near as six weeks from hence.'

It was the more necessary for the Allied Powers to satisfy Austria that our terms of peace were reasonable, as Russia by this time had intimated her intention to accept the Four Points as the basis of negotiation. This was a step calculated to perplex Austria, and to arrest her intention of binding herself to overt acts against Russia. It probably had no other purpose, and the conduct of Russia at a later stage fully justified this suspicion. But in any case this design, if it existed, was baffled by the frank explanations given by the Allied Powers to Austria, which showed that their views were in entire accord with the conditions which she had herself previously approved, and accordingly she executed the Treaty with France and England on the 2nd of December.

While the alarm inspired by the full accounts of the Battle of Inkermann was still fresh, tidings were received (26th November) of a hurricane which had ravaged the coasts of the Crimea on the 14th of that month, and sent to the bottom of the sea vast stores of ammunition, and the bulk of the warm clothing which had been prepared during the summer for the use of our troops. Two French ships of the line and twenty-four of our transports had been wrecked in the gale; and the elements themselves seemed to have expended their worst fury in order to increase the difficulties, already sufficiently great, with which the besieging armies had to contend.[9] Not an hour was lost in despatching agents to Glasgow, Nottingham, and elsewhere, to purchase fresh supplies of warm clothing at any cost: and it was no small alleviation of the anxiety of the Government, that the same mail which brought the details of the disaster brought news of the arrival at Balaclava of *The Jura* transport, with a large supply of blankets and clothing, and also of a merchant ship with the latter commodity for sale on speculation.[10]

The Prince's Diary (26th November) contains the brief entry: 'The army must be increased.' With him 'the firstlings of his thought' in an emergency were also 'the firstlings of his hand,' and he despatched to Mr. Sidney Herbert (then Secretary at War) the following suggestions for effecting this object, and at the same time securing a permanent reserve force within easy reach of the Commander-in-chief:—

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[9] In the *Prince* alone, a magnificent steamship of 2,700 tons, which had fortunately landed the 46th Regiment at Balaclava a few days before, a cargo valued at 500,000*l.* was lost. In the *Resolute*, another of the vessels wrecked, were 900 tons of powder.

[10] Letter from Sir Edmund Lyons to Sir James Graham, 18th November, 1854.

'My dear Mr. Herbert,— . . . . The step which will now have to be taken will be the decisive one for the rest of the war, and I hope it will not be taken without the maturest deliberation.

'Our last step of organisation, bringing each regiment up to twelve companies, was the right one, as an organisation adapted either for peace or war. It has failed, however, in supplying with sufficient quickness the tremendous expenditure of men in the Crimea. It has failed particularly in supplying the army of Lord Raglan, on account of the distance of 3,000 miles between the basis and the field of battle. A mere reference home in writing and its answer require six weeks, and the time for providing troops increases it to two months under the most favourable circumstances, during which the whole state of things may be altered. We know from experience that communications by letter from Lord Raglan supply but scanty information.

'What is imperatively demanded, therefore, is an intermediate depot upon which Lord Raglan *would draw at pleasure*, and which would be kept supplied from home.

'Adapting our present organisation to this want, for every four companies in depot at home there should be an equal depot established at Malta—these depots to be united in provisional battalions like the provisional battalions at home. They would form at the same time the whole garrison, and would require all the accommodation at that place, setting free all the regiments now there.

'If Malta would not hold sufficient depots, the system might be further extended to Gibraltar. Our present depots might go out at once, and fresh ones be formed at home. We should then have—

1st. Depots of four companies in England for recruiting and instruction.

2nd. Depots at Malta as a reserve to the army in the field, and for further training.

3rd. Battalions of eight companies in the field always kept complete.

'The invalids might join the reserves, and a great deal of shipping would thus be saved.

'Napoleon always had reserves for his army between it and the home depots; without them, in fact, it cannot be carried on. Moreover, what I lay the greatest stress upon, Lord Raglan would have his reserves within command, and the knowledge of what he has, and what he has to expect, will be his safest guide in regulating his operations.

'I recommend this to the most serious consideration of the Duke of Newcastle, to whom you will be good enough to communicate this letter. I shall be at Buckingham Palace to-morrow, where I shall be very glad to meet you with the Duke and Lord Hardinge to talk this matter over. Will you kindly appoint them?

'Windsor Castle, 28th November, 1854.

Next day the meeting which the Prince had requested took place. His plan was submitted to the Cabinet by the Duke of Newcastle with the approval of Lord Hardinge and Mr. Sidney Herbert, and on the 1st of December Lord Aberdeen informed the Queen that it had been adopted. An army of reserve amounting to 16,000 men was to be formed at Malta, and one half of this force, it was hoped, would soon be completed. The same letter conveyed the welcome intelligence that a contract had been sanctioned for a railroad from Balaclava to the camp before Sebastopol, 'principally in order to spare the incredible labour necessary to drag the artillery from the coast, which had hitherto been performed by the seamen of the fleet.' A contract was also entered into for laying a telegraphic cable at the joint expense of France and England, between Cape Kalerga, near Varna, and the Monastery of St. George, between Balaclava and Kamiesch Bay.[11]

A few days later brought further details of the storm of the 14th, and of the measures which had been taken to repair the losses by it. Reinforcements were arriving, and the extreme right of our position was being strengthened against the renewal of such attacks as those of the 26th of October and the 5th of November. Sir Edmund Lyons wrote to Sir James Graham that he found 'a hopeful as well as a determined spirit prevailing in both armies. They all feel,' he added, 'and with reason, that hitherto everything has been honourable and glorious for the arms of England and France. They have confidence in the support of the two Governments and the two countries, and are resolved to deserve that support, and, through the blessing of God on a good cause, to conquer.'

Sir Edmund Lyons was not a man to despond in difficulties; but letters from officers in less responsible positions confirmed his report as to the undaunted spirit of the troops, while making no secret of the terrible strain upon their endurance, in the absence of almost everything essential to keep them from sinking from exhaustion under the combined assaults of cold, and wet, and hunger, and fatigue.

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[11] This cable, 400 miles in length, was connected with a telegraph from Varna to Rustchuk, from which place a complete system of communication with England already existed. In this way direct and secret communication was established between the Offices of the War Department in England and Paris and the head-quarters of the English and French Commanders-in-chief. The first telegram transmitted was on the 4th of May, 1855. Hitherto the first news of what was passing in the Crimea had reached us through St. Petersburg. From this time St. Petersburg got its earliest news through London and Paris.

CHAPTER LIX.

By those who, like the Prince, were able to look to far-off results through the distractions of present difficulties, the issues involved in the great struggle of Inkermann were not hard to divine. The dauntless courage of a comparative handful of Englishmen had rolled back the overwhelming force which the Czar had hoped would have swept them into ruin. A great calamity had been averted. But while the events of that day showed too palpably how perilous was the position in which we stood, they also showed no less clearly, that we must fight out to the uttermost the contest in which we were engaged. The fall of Sebastopol could alone save the Allied armies, and that object must be attained, cost what it might. To re-embark in face of a force so powerful as that of the Russians was impossible. Infinite shame, as well as infinite loss, must have followed on the attempt.

But, if England and France did their duty by the soldiers who had thus far nobly maintained the national honour, had we, in truth, any reason for apprehension? The same valour which had stood the shock of Inkermann might be relied on to hold its grasp on the plateau between Sebastopol and the sea. It had only to do so until England and France brought into play the advantages secured to them by the command of the sea, and success must follow. For the resources of Russia, however vast, were being expended at a rate, and with a rapidity, which must lead, at no very distant period, to exhaustion, separated as they were from the theatre of war by immense tracts of country, without good or numerous roads or sufficient means of transport. In the failure, therefore, of the Russian attack on Inkermann, the fate of Sebastopol was in effect decided. However others might waver—and men of high position did waver—the Prince never for a moment faltered in this conviction. The beleaguered city must fall. There could be no going back from the task which we had imposed upon ourselves.

The spirit of the army, tried as it had already been, and speedily to be doomed to still heavier trial, was excellent. 'Our position here,' the same officer whose letter we have quoted above, p. 157, writes from the camp on the 16th of December, 'is very critical, and we are well aware of the difficulties we are likely to have to contend against; still we feel that, though inferior in numbers, we are more than a match for the enemy, and the idea of the *possibility* of being *beaten* by them never for one instant occurs to any man amongst us.' Again, an officer of the Guards writes to Colonel Phipps on the 18th: 'I wish words could express the cool, determined, unflinching bravery of our men. At Inkermann, every minute one expected they must give way. Had they done so the day was lost; but no, they retired, when forced back by overwhelming numbers, foot by foot, not a man hanging back; and the cheer and dash they made on receiving reinforcements were glorious. *One felt inclined to hug them all, when the action was over.*' With such men what was not to be hoped for? For such men what would not their countrymen at home be prepared to do?

Had the arrangements for the care of the army been as complete and efficient as they proved to be the reverse, public feeling would still have found it necessary for its own satisfaction to show active sympathy with its struggles and inevitable sufferings. Accordingly, early in October, a letter from Sir R. Peel to *The Times* led to a subscription being opened for the sick and wounded. In less than a fortnight a sum of about 15,000*l*. was received at *The Times*' office, and the proprietors of that journal sent out a Commissioner to administer this fund in the shape of medicines and necessary comforts. Incalculable good resulted from this timely aid, and so thoroughly was this felt that, when at a later date the subscription was reopened, the amount originally subscribed was raised to 25,462*l*. On the 13th of October, a Royal Commission, at the head of which was the Prince, was issued for the purpose of establishing 'a fund for relief of the orphans and widows of soldiers, sailors, and marines who may fall in the present war.' This fund, known as the Patriotic Fund, before the end of the year exceeded half a million, and ultimately rose to more than a million and a quarter. Subscriptions were also raised for sending additional chaplains to the seat of war, to aid the overtasked military chaplains there.

A staff of female hospital nurses was at the same time organised. Miss Florence Nightingale, a lady pre-eminently fitted for the task by her great natural gifts for organisation, and by invaluable experience gained at the Hospital of Kaiserswerth in Prussia and elsewhere abroad, at the request of Mr. Sidney Herbert undertook the direction of this devoted band, and, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Bracebridge and his wife, proceeded with thirty-seven lady nurses to Constantinople. They reached Scutari on the 5th of November, in time to receive the soldiers who had been wounded at the battle of Balaclava. On the arrival of Miss Nightingale, the great hospital at Scutari, where all had up to this time been chaos and discomfort, was reduced to order; and those tender lenitives, which only woman's thought and woman's sympathy can bring to the sick man's couch, were applied to solace and alleviate the agonies of pain, or the torture of fever and prostration. The introduction of such an addition to the staff of a military hospital had been deprecated by the worshippers of official routine—with such men nothing new can be good—but so completely did experience belie their fears, that a further staff of fifty trained female nurses was soon afterwards sent from England, to aid in the work which Miss Nightingale and her assistants had begun. In the records of the war, the services of these admirable women occupy a page to which their countrymen must always turn with pride.

While public munificence was busy doing what it might for the well-being and comfort of the army, individual acts of kindness were not wanting in every quarter. It was but little, after all, that could be done, but everything helped to bring the animating assurance of sympathy, where in truth it was sorely needed. The Queen herself, the elder Princesses, and Her Majesty's ladies. made woollen comforters, mittens, and other warm coverings, which were sent out and distributed among the soldiers. Thousands of gentle hands throughout the country worked long hours unweariedly for the same praiseworthy purpose. On his part, the Prince sent fur great coats to all his brother officers of the Brigade of Guards, and a liberal supply of tobacco to their men, and also to the men of the two Battalions of Rifles, and of the 11th Hussars.

'You may be quite sure,' wrote Colonel Upton (22nd December), when acknowledging the gift to Colonel Phipps, 'it will be duly appreciated, especially coming from the quarter it does. Nothing can be more pleasant to these poor fellows, and more convincing in its effect, than the thought that his Royal Highness has been mindful of their creature comforts and wants during their absence on this service. No one but those who have lived the life very recently, can know how the hearts of those who have been enduring toil, and fatigue, and exposure, are gladdened and nerved by the knowledge that their Queen, as well as his Royal Highness, had been heard expressing their sympathy and warm interest in their sufferings, and admiration of all that has been done by them. *It is a sort of exultation that makes out of every one two at least.*'

How great were the sympathy and how warm the interest of both the Queen and Prince, it would be impossible to overstate. The accounts of the privations which the army in the Crimea was now suffering were heart-rending. The siege operations were practically at a standstill. The camp was drenched with rain. The men, reduced in numbers and enfeebled by want of food, and rest, and shelter, were tasked to the utmost limit of their strength to hold their own in the trenches. The Commissariat had broken down for want of the means of transport. With abundance of provisions a few miles off at Balaclava, men and horses were perishing for lack of food. The horses, that had carried their riders so magnificently into the enemy's lines on the memorable 25th of October, were either rotting in a sea of mud, or being wasted away in doing the ignoble work of sumpter mules; while the survivors of Inkermann, after spending a day and night in the trenches, were often compelled to wade through mire to Balaclava to bring up the rations. which the Commissariat were without the means of forwarding to the front. All the evils, in short, were threatening the army, which want of foresight and of effective organisation for the exigencies of a lengthened campaign could not fail to inflict. Who were to blame? was the question in every mouth. It was by no means easy to find an answer to a question, which only too many were ready to discuss; but to find and to apply the remedy was the one thing needful, and to this the thoughts of both the Queen and Prince were most anxiously turned.

The reports from Lord Raglan as to the condition of the army were most meagre; his letters being silent as to the sufferings, with accounts of which private letters, as well as newspapers, were teeming. From them it was impossible to learn what was wanted for the supplies and comfort of the troops, and the Government could, therefore, only act upon conjecture, and send out whatever they thought was likely to be required. Scarcely less meagre were the official returns, which were barren of the most essential information as to the numbers of the army available and not available for action, the provision made for their shelter, clothing, and food, the supply of horses, the means of transport, all those details, in short, in the absence of which the Government could neither know on what force they had to depend, nor how that force was to be maintained in a state of efficiency. It seems to have struck the Prince, and the Prince alone, that, until this radical defect was cured, it would be impossible to abate the evils by which the conduct of the campaign was now so seriously hampered. Accordingly, on the 31st of December, he called the attention of the Duke of Newcastle to the subject by letter :—

'My dear Duke,' he wrote, 'The want of system and order in our army before Sebastopol, entailing, as it does, much confusion and positive suffering to our gallant troops, as well as painful uncertainty to their well-wishers at home, has, as you know, much distressed and occupied me. I know but of one remedy, where people are not born with the instinct of method, and are prevented by want of time or inclination from writing, and that is, an efficient and detailed form of Returns to be filled up by them. These Returns should be framed in such a manner that the mere act of filling them up shall compel attention to all the points which ought to be brought under the wholesome influence of method, and on which the Home authorities imperatively require the amplest information.'

The Prince accompanied his letter with a complete scheme of tabulated Returns drawn up by himself,—in which he had aimed at combining completeness of information on all important points with such brevity as could not reasonably deter those whose duty it was to fill them up from the labour of doing so. To these was added a full explanatory Memorandum, and the Prince asked to be put in communication with the person whom the Duke might charge with the task of settling the form of the Returns. With such Returns before them, the Government would be kept fully informed as to the state of the army engaged at Sebastopol from week to week, its guns, horses, equipments, and stores, how the men were secured against weather,—in a word, as to every particular which might enable them duly to meet all necessary requirements for the comforts and appointments of the men, and of materials for the siege.

Two days afterwards, it appears from the Prince's Diary, he had a conference with the Duke of Newcastle on the subject of this communication. Between this period and the time when the Duke left office, he was probably unable to arrange for the reform of the existing want of system. But one of the first acts of Lord Panmure, his successor at the War Office, was to require Lord Raglan to furnish the information pointed to by the Prince. His language is so nearly that of the Prince's Memorandum, that it may be presumed to have been before him when he wrote (12th February, 1855) the following letter to Lord Raglan:—

'It appears to me that your Lordship's reports to my department are too scanty, and, in order to remedy this inconvenience, I have to request that you will call upon General Officers commanding Divisions, and they in their turn will desire their Brigadiers to furnish reports once a fortnight, which you will regularly forward for my information. These reports must exhibit fully the state of the troops in camp. They will mention the condition of their clothing, the amount and regularity of issue of their rations, the state of their quarters, and the cleanliness of the camp in its several parts. . . . The General Officers will mention in these reports any difficulties which may have occurred as to the issue of rations, fuel, or forage, and you must inquire strictly and immediately into all neglect, and visit upon the delinquent the punishment due to his fault.

'By following the above directions you will, at little trouble to yourself, convey to me most interesting information, for all which I am at present compelled to rely on the reports of unofficial individuals.'

The instructions here given were carried out; and from this time Reports, accompanied by tabular Returns on the model of those suggested by the Prince, were regularly forwarded to the Secretary for War, and by him to the Queen. With these before them, the Home authorities could see at a glance the strength of the available force before Sebastopol, what gaps had to be supplied, what guns, stores, clothing, &c., had to be provided, and, above all,—which defects in the previously existing system had shown to be of the utmost moment,—whether what had been actually provided and supplied from home for the army had been duly forwarded to its destination. This was one of the first and most efficient steps towards curing the abuses, which, during the winter of 1854–1855, caused so much loss and suffering to the English forces. The wonder is, that a reform of this nature should have been left to emanate from one who had no practical experience in war. May this not be read as one indication among many, that in designating the Prince for his successor at the Horse Guards, the Duke of Wellington had acted on a well-founded conviction of his Royal Highness's special fitness for the office?

This winter set in with unusual severity in England. Its rigours seemed to give poignancy to the pain, which every fresh communication from the Crimea was calculated to aggravate. What the prevailing feeling was, Mr. Bright, no lover of the war, expressed in the House of Commons (23rd

February, 1855), when he said, 'Thousands, scores of thousands of persons, have retired to rest, night after night, whose slumbers have been disturbed or whose dreams have been busied with the sufferings and agonies of our soldiers in the Crimea.' At the kindly Christmas time men's thoughts naturally travelled away from the warmth of their own hearth-fires to the wind-swept slopes, where so many of their countrymen were fighting for very life against fearful odds. Nowhere less than in the Palace were their hardships likely to be forgotten; and the Queen, while sending salutation to her troops on New Year's day through Lord Raglan, seized the opportunity to press the consideration of these hardships upon his personal attention, to which there was reason to think it had not been sufficiently directed. It was thus Her Majesty wrote:—

'The sad privations of the army, the bad weather, and the constant sickness are causes of the deepest concern and anxiety to the Queen and Prince. The braver her noble troops are, the more patiently and heroically they bear all their trials and sufferings, the more miserable we feel at their long continuance. The Queen trusts that Lord Raglan will be *very* strict in seeing that no *unnecessary* privations are incurred by any negligence of those whose duty it is to watch over their wants.

'The Queen heard that their coffee was given them green, instead of roasted, and some other things of this kind, which have distressed her, as she feels so anxious that they should be made as comfortable as circumstances can admit of. The Queen earnestly trusts, that the large amount of warm clothing sent out has not only reached Balaclava, but has been distributed, and that Lord Raglan has been successful in procuring the means of hutting for the men.

'Lord Raglan cannot think how much we suffer for the army, and how painfully anxious we are to know that their privations are decreasing. . . . The Queen cannot conclude without wishing Lord Raglan and the whole of the army, in the Prince's name and her own, a happy and *glorious* New Year.'

By this time a loud outcry against Lord Raglan had begun in the press. He was charged with neglecting to see to the actual state of his troops, and to the necessary measures for their relief. Their condition was becoming more and more pitiable; their numbers dwindling rapidly from death and disease.[1] The road between Balaclava and the camp had become a muddy quagmire, the few remaining horses of our cavalry were rapidly disappearing, every day the difficulty of getting up food and other necessaries from Balaclava was becoming more serious, and still no provision was being made for supplying an effective means of transport. The disastrous consequences were now being felt of the neglect to construct, during the fine weather, a sound road from the camp to the port, from which its supplies were drawn. In the anxiety to open our batteries, and to maintain a fire upon Sebastopol, every available horse and man had been called into play. It was in vain that the military authorities urged, in answer to the complaints that reached them from England, that if, instead of this, they had, on their arrival before Sebastopol, employed any of their scanty forces in making a road and in other preparations for wintering in the Crimea, all England would have been up in arms at their delay, and would have ascribed the failure of the attack to over-precaution. This might be true; but what of that? The question was not, what might have been said in a certain event, but what ought to have been done? The very terms of the defence implied, that under an apprehension of unjust censure the attack upon Sebastopol had been made without first making provision against the contingency of a failure, which had yet been foreseen. Only a success, which those upon the spot did not dare to hope for, could have vindicated such a course. Success had not been achieved, and now the inevitable penalty followed. For when did general or statesman swerve from his conviction, to gratify a popular outcry,—the *ardor civium prava jubentium*,—but he had to expiate his weakness in the reproaches of those to whose clamour he had yielded? So it was now. Loudest in condemnation of Lord Raglan were the very men who, in the fulness of their ignorance as to the scanty resources at his disposal, compared with those of his adversaries, had been most vehement in urging that Sebastopol must fall before a vigorous attack.

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[1] On the 22nd of January Colonel Gordon writes to General Grey, 'Our effectives to-day are only 10,362!'

When the failure of the fire of the Allies on the 17th of October had demonstrated, that Sebastopol was not to be taken except by regular siege, the formation of a sound road between the camp and Balaclava should clearly have been the first thought. It was true, that we had no men to spare for the work, but labourers from Constantinople or even from England might easily have been procured, had the necessary steps been taken. A great general, a Wellington, a Napoleon, or a Moltke, would never have omitted to make himself secure on so essential a point. But the man at the head of our army, admirable as he was in much, was not gifted with the imaginative genius of a great commander, which foresees the contingencies of a compaign, and provides for them by anticipation. He could handle his army well in the field. But how to ensure for it the food, clothing, and shelter, the want of which are more deadly than all the casualties of battle, was a problem apparently beyond his grasp. In any case, it was one with which he did not grapple till too late. The absence of this quality was all the more disastrous, inasmuch as the system, with which he had to work, was defective in any provision for the emergency which had arisen. It was a matter of dispute, in fact, on whom the duty of seeing to the efficiency of the road rested, whether on the Quartermaster-General's department, or that of the Commissariat. Neither had men or means for the work upon the spot, and there was no one to insist that these should be instantly provided elsewhere. The flaw was but one of many in the organisation of the army, which the experiences of the campaign had brought and were daily bringing into relief, and which forced upon the view the necessity for a thorough reform of our military system. 'The present administration of the army is not to be defended. My heart bleeds to think of it!' are the Prince's words, in a letter of the 20th of January of this year to King Leopold.

The subject was no new one to the Prince. It had occupied his thoughts for years, and by the camp at Chobham, and by the scheme of a permanent camp at Aldershot, some of his ideas had been carried into effect. By these he had sought to neutralise a defect in the system, to which the Great Duke, by his mode of dealing with the army at home during a long peace, had given encouragement. 'In his extreme desire,' says Colonel Hamley, in his able monograph on Wellington,[2] 'to keep the military subordinate to the civil power, he treated the army as a machine to be taken to pieces and packed away in small fractions till it should be needed. To the officers the consequence was, that none of them, even of high rank, ever had, while in England, an opportunity of seeing a division assembled, and that they could consequently have no practical acquaintance with the relation which the dry details of evolution and regimental duty bear to the operations of a force composed of the different arms.' In this view, as will be seen from the Memorandum presently to be quoted, the Prince by anticipation concurred, and he mentions it in explanation of the causes which had contributed to the defects of our army system. The time, he conceived, had come for dealing with the whole subject in a comprehensive spirit, and although he was at this period much prostrated, as his Diary shows, by a protracted attack of influenza, he gathered up his strength to embody his views in one of his carefully studied Memorandums.

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[2] *Wellington's Career: A Military and Practical Summary.* By E. B. Hamley. Blackwood, 1860: p. 107.

On the merits of this Memorandum only the judgment of military men can be of any value; but we have the authority of the distinguished officer, now the head of the Staff College, from whom we have just quoted, for saying, that 'it has been the aim of military reformers since to embody all its suggestions, and that all have been put in practice,' with the exception of certain points of detail, with which the Memorandum either does not deal at all, or only imperfectly. It does not indeed profess to be exhaustive, and the Prince had already, in his communications with the Government, dealt with such questions as the formation of reserves, the term of service, and other important particulars on which the Memorandum does not touch. Some of the details of organisation, of which the Memorandum speaks, we are informed by Colonel Hamley, have always been regarded as necessary for an army in the field, and what the Prince says on these points, therefore, although excellent so far as it goes, is not entitled to the same merit for originality, as the rest of the paper. Upon the whole, however, Colonel Hamley considers that this paper 'distinctly hits the blots in the system as it then existed, affords another proof of the soundness of the Prince Consort's judgment, and of his capacity for being a leader in reform, and will enhance his repute as a thinker and administrator.' With so high a testimony to its merits, it will not be out of place to preserve a record of this interesting document:—

'Windsor Castle, 14th January, 1855.

'It was always to be expected, that after an European peace of forty years, a great war, finding us on a reduced peace establishment, with most of our experienced generals dead or superannuated, would expose us to much danger, and our armies possibly at the outset even to reverses.

'Whilst other countries, enjoying less liberty than our own, and compelled by their Continental position, have kept up large standing armies, and employed the forty years in constant application to the organisation and exercise of those armies, we have directed our whole ingenuity to devices to reduce expenditure, and to avoid public attention being drawn to the affairs of the army.[3]

'A maxim having even received public acceptation that England was not a military country, and should never again engage in a Continental war, great fears were naturally entertained when the army was suddenly called upon to embark in a contest with the two greatest military Powers, the one as an enemy to be overcome, the other as an ally to be rivalled.

'Notwithstanding a pre-conceived determination on the part of the public to consider our army as inferior in all military qualities to the French, events have shown that our small army was prepared to take the field as early as the French, and, when they came to the first battle, actually outnumbered it. The victories it has since achieved over the Russians have placed it before the world as pre-eminent in fighting qualities, discipline, and obedience, and even beyond this, in a cheerful spirit of resignation, under every possible description of sickness, privation, and hardship.

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[3] Do not our public men, in a competition, not unnatural, to outvie their rivals in reducing our military expenditure, still foster too much the prevailing disposition to rely for security on our insular position and naval supremacy? If we are to command the respect of other countries, and to retain a firm hold of those vast colonial and foreign possessions, which go so far to make the greatness and to justify the influence of England, we cannot hope to escape the expense of maintaining an army which shall be something more than merely sufficient for purposes of national police or for the wants of the colonies and our Indian empire. We may not always be able to count on the friendliness of other States: in prudence we ought not to leave ourselves at their mercy.

'When, however, it became engaged in a protracted siege, great wants, exhibiting almost a state of helplessness, became apparent. The nation is alarmed, and urgent and loud in its complaints. The most opposite causes are pointed out as having produced the state of things complained of. Some find fault with the age of our Commander; some with the youth and inexperience of the Staff; some with the aristocratic composition of our corps of officers; some with the subdivision of departments in the army; some with the civil departments at home; others abuse personally particular generals abroad and Ministers at home, and what they term Horse Guards officials.

'All these causes may have contributed in various degrees to what we deplore, and, more than all these, the distance of 3,000 miles to the seat of war. But I am firmly convinced that the chief cause is to be found in our military system.

'An army is but an instrument, and, according to the way in which you construct that instrument, it will work. It is worth inquiring what our system really is.

'I hazard the opinion, that our army, as at present organised, *can hardly be called an army at all*, but a mere aggregate of battalions of infantry, with some regiments of cavalry, and an artillery regiment.

'In our ancient wars distinct regiments were raised by different noblemen and others for special services, and these, with the King's guards, organised after the model of Louis XIV., with his Hanoverian troops, foreign mercenaries and native levies in India, formed the fighting power of India in all her later wars. During the Peninsular war, under the guidance of the Duke of Wellington, the British force for the first time assumed such numbers, and was kept so long together, as to enable him to introduce an *army system*. It came out of the contest with the admiration of the world, but at the signature of peace this army, as such, was broken up.

'All the generals were put on the shelf, all the machinery to which it owed its efficiency was done away with, and nothing kept but its admirable *regimental system*, readily acknowledged by all the military authorities who are acquainted with it, as hardly to be surpassed. The cry for economy, and what Lord Castlereagh termed 'an ignorant impatience of taxation,' forced upon successive Governments reduction upon reduction, and such a distribution of the remaining troops as to form an apology for keeping any at all. In fact, *the army has never been acknowledged by the nation as a national want, with recognised claims to its consideration*.

'We have nothing but distinct battalions.

'These distinct battalions have been used in an order of rotation, more or less adhered to, for Colonial garrisons, as Indian auxiliaries, and for duties at home, rather those of a police force than of regular troops. Occasionally some of them have been thrown together *à l'impromptu*, to meet a war in some foreign climate suddenly thrust upon the country, and generally not foreseen. Some old general officer, usually the accidental senior on the nearest station, has been put in command, with a staff formed by him in haste from his younger friends and relations. Yet the country has never been disappointed in its expectations, owing to the admirable conduct of the battalions, guided by officers, gentlemen in every sense of the word, who have conquered vast countries, with means ludicrously small compared with those against which they had to contend, or that would have been employed for the same purpose by any other country. During the necessary difficulties of their campaigns the country has confined itself to abusing the old generals (Gough in India, then in China, Smith at the Cape, Godwin in Burmah, &c.), but when the difficulties have been overcome, it has never felt the duty of doing anything towards rendering future tasks to these noble troops less difficult.

'We have in consequence, as I have said, admirable battalions, but nothing beyond;—*No generals* (as a rule) *trained and practised in the duties of that rank* (for, as soon as a colonel obtains that rank, he is, as a system, placed on the half pay, and not afterwards employed, except, if at all, as inspecting officer in a district, or as commandant of a garrison);—*No general staff or staff corps*[4] (to the organisation of which all Continental Powers have paid the most special and minute attention);—*No field commissariat, no field army department; no ambulance corps, no baggage train, no corps of drivers, no corps of artisans; no practice, or possibility of acquiring it, in the combined use of the three arms, cavalry, infantry, and artillery;—No general qualified to handle more than one of these arms, and the artillery kept as distinct from the army as if it were a separate profession.*

'This has naturally produced, in addition, other detrimental consequences, such as these, that we have no barracks for more than a battalion here and there; no means of providing for the defences of the coast, nor of garrisoning the defences either existing or proposed, not even such as Plymouth and Portsmouth, where the barrack accommodation is perfectly miserable. In fact, we have nothing but 103 battalions, of which about a third or a half are generally at home.

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[4] A year later (16th Feb. 1856) we find the Prince lamenting, in a letter to the King of the Belgians, that he has been unable to get public men to recognise this radical flaw in our military system. 'What is bad in the army has been occasioned by the House of Commons. It has never allowed us to have permanent generals in the service, nor a general staff; and herein lies the fault. No army in the world could hold its own, as after all ours has done, if military service as a profession is to culminate in the command of a battalion, and if "a particular officer for a particular job" is to be appointed merely casually after twenty years of other occupations. *With all the outcry about reform, I have not been able to make anybody comprehend this.*'

'More might perhaps have been done in giving practice, in moving and handling and supplying troops, by occasional concentrations and reviews on a large scale, but fear of incurring expense, and a general dislike to what is contemptuously called "playing at soldiers," have prevented this, until the camp at Chobham was formed the year before last under the pressure of "the invasion panic."

'If the defects we suffer from be here correctly stated, the remedy would lie in giving to the British army *permanently* the organisation which every other army in Europe enjoys, viz. that of brigades and divisions.

'The 103 battalions of infantry would form 34 brigades, and these 17 divisions. The 23 regiments of cavalry 8 brigades. Each of the 17 divisions ought to have its proper complement of artillery permanently attached to it, say 24 guns, and kept complete.

'The cavalry not doing Colonial duty should be attached at home by brigades to the respective divisions. Each division and each brigade ought to have its staff, commissariat, medical department, ambulance, and baggage train attached to it. By keeping these commands and appointments filled up, we alone can get the means of judging of the fitness of men for command, and give *them* the means of fitting themselves for it.

'The divisions ought to be placed in accordance with a comprehensive view of the exigences of the country at home and abroad, and with reference to the duties which they may be called upon to perform. Camps of evolution, in which the troops should be concentrated and drilled together during a portion of the year, should at the same time be formed.[5]

'I abstain from proposing a detailed system of distribution, which would want more consideration, but to show that the plan is feasible, I will sketch out a possible scheme;—one division at Gibraltar, one at Malta, one in the Ionian Islands, four in India, one at the Cape and Mauritius, one in Australia, China, Ceylon, one in the Transatlantic Provinces, including the West Indies, seven at home, of which four in Great Britain and three in Ireland.

'I would keep quite distinct from this *effective army* the regimental depot organisation. The depot battalions would be dispersed in the small barracks now occupied by the service battalions.

'The objections which will be urged against this plan will, I presume, be, first, the necessity of giving the battalions their fair turn of foreign and home service; but this may be obtained by either relieving whole divisions, or brigades in the divisions, or regiments in the brigades; secondly, the impossibility of keeping the divisions together under all circumstances; but the temporary detachment of brigades or battalions need not disturb the general system; thirdly, the increased expense; but this cannot be great, in fact, amounting to no more than the difference between the half and full pay, and allowances of some fifty general officers and their staff. The additional expense arising out of the organisation of ambulance and baggage trains will be compensated by the saving of the lavish and often useless expenditure caused by the necessity of suddenly having to create all this in the emergency of war.

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[5] 'This sentence,' says Colonel Hamley, 'contains the germ of Aldershot.' No doubt; and long before the Crimean war was dreamt of, the Prince had pressed the formation of this camp on the Government as an urgent necessity—a necessity only acknowledged, however, when bitter experience had shown, that, despite 'that eternal lack of pence, which is the curse of public men,' it must be provided for.

'On the whole, the difficulty, if not utter impossibility of creating the whole machinery which constitutes an army at the moment when this army is to take the field and meet the enemy, induces a lavish and absurd expenditure, when the finances are already heavily drawn upon,—is in the highest degree prejudicial and cruel to those noble soldiers who go forth to expose themselves to every danger and hardship,—unfair to those who are suddenly called upon to undertake the various duties for which they have had no opportunity of qualifying themselves,—exposes the army to disaster,—and imperils both the best interests and the honour of the country.

'If this want, which has been thus pointed out, be not supplied, those will be much mistaken who imagine that the evils now complained of can be remedied either by a change in our system of promotion, or in the class of society from which our officers are drawn, or by transferring the patronage of the army from a military commander to a political partisan, or by recasting all existing military and civil departments, putting the army under civil or Parliamentary command, or by any other scheme lately urged by the press; as none of them all will give the organs of vitality to an army, which are indispensable to it when it is to take the field.'

This Memorandum was sent at once (14th January, 1856) by the Prince to Lord Aberdeen, with a request that it might be circulated amongst the members of the Cabinet, as the organisation of the army would probably be the chief topic of discussion in the approaching Session.[6] It was accordingly submitted to several of the leading members of the Government, by most of whom, it appears from a brief entry in the Prince's Diary on the 20th of January, it was approved. But it was left to another Ministry to deal with practically, for on the 24th the Aberdeen Administration had ceased to exist.

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[6] Among the Prince's papers are letters by the late Mr. Edward Ellice, Sir Frederick Stovin, and Lord Seaton, in which the Prince's suggestions are discussed in detail, and generally with marked approval.

CHAPTER LX.

The recoil from the extravagant hopes which had been raised in England by the triumphant progress of the Allied armies up to the time of their arrival before Sebastopol would, under any circumstances, have led to angry dissatisfaction with the leaders, to whom success up to this point was assumed to have been in a great measure due. Those leaders felt this keenly, as the full consciousness of their position dawned upon them, and they saw that it was not a fortress they were attacking, but an army, with apparently inexhaustible reinforcements at its back, and already superior in numbers to their own, firmly entrenched on ground of immense strength, and provided with an overwhelming weight of artillery. Writing on the morning after the battle of Inkermann, Sir John Burgoyne says,[1] 'More will be required of us than we can possibly undertake, . . . and, as *les malheureux ont toujours tort*, I expect we shall have as little mercy from friends as from foes! In fact, we have been engaged in an undertaking for which we had not sufficient means. Our force is little more than half of what we have landed in the Crimea! Our losses yesterday nearly one half of the forces engaged! These are tests at least of the exertions of the army: their leaders will, I presume, be the victims.'

It was hard for their countrymen at home, who had such good reason to put faith in the valour of the army, and who were prepared to spend the resources of the Empire without stint to support them in their enterprise, to understand why there should have been any lack of means for carrying it on, still less why every precaution should not have been taken to secure the comfort of the scanty force on whom the stress of this gigantic undertaking had now fallen. While clamouring eagerly for a vigorous prosecution of the war, they had never stopped to inquire whether our military system had made provision for the efficient working of the complicated machinery of a great army in the field. When, therefore, it broke down, as it did for the reasons explained in the Prince's Memorandum, the public indignation was, as it could scarcely fail to be, directed against those whose misfortune it was to have to administer a radically defective system, at a juncture when it was put for the first time to the test of actual warfare with a powerful enemy. Genius itself, either military or civil, while it might have averted many of the disasters, which were due to want of forethought and organisation, could scarcely have averted all. It could not improvise the well-trained and experienced soldiers, who were wanted to supply the huge gaps created by the losses from battle and disease; neither could it organise, in defiance of the restrictions of a sleepy routine, the system of transport, of ambulances, and hospital management, which should have been established and in good working order before our army took the field. When the 'horrible and heart-rending' suffering which had resulted and obviously must continue to result from these flaws in our military system became known in England, a storm of indignation arose, which sought a vent in exaggerated abuse not only of the leaders in the field, but of the Administration at home.

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[1] Letter to Colonel Matson, R.E., printed in *Life and Correspondence of Sir John Burgoyne*, by his Son-in-law. London, 1873, vol. ii. p. 118.

The Head of the Administration had all along been unjustly accused of supineness in the prosecution of the war; and in this he was assumed to be countenanced by the Peelite section of the Cabinet, to which the two War Secretaries, the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Sidney Herbert, belonged. This supineness, said to be begotten of a deep-seated antipathy to the war itself, was alleged to lie at the root of all that had gone amiss in the conduct of the campaign; and, with incredible unfairness, the men responsible for the honour of the Empire and for the well-being of the army were accused of being not merely insensible to these duties, but too indolent to bestir themselves towards meeting the tremendous exigencies of the hour. The truth was all the other way. They had been the first to see the mischiefs which the defects of our system were bringing upon us, and had toiled day and night to repair them by every means in their power. While the other members of the Cabinet were seeking rest in the country, Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle remained in London, meeting, to the utmost of their ability, every want which was brought to their notice from head-quarters, and anticipating others, which the best practical advice within their reach at home suggested as likely to arise. Knowing better than any other men could know what the evils were that demanded cure, their days and nights were racked with anxiety, from the consciousness that any complete cure was beyond their reach. It was the one subject which occupied all their energies; and yet they were singled out for obloquy as mainly responsible for the confusion and suffering which prevailed both at the seat of war and in the hospitals on the Bosphorus.

While bearing as best they might the imputations to which they were exposed from without, an agitation arose within the Cabinet itself to augment their anxieties. Early in November Lord John Russell appealed to Lord Aberdeen to concentrate the offices of Secretary at War and Secretary of State for War, displacing the Duke of Newcastle, and vesting both offices in Lord Palmerston, as the only man 'who, from experience of military details, from inherent vigour of mind, and from weight with the House of Commons, could be expected to guide the great operations of war with authority and success.' While expressly disclaiming any intention to impute blame to the Duke, Lord John urged that he had not 'the authority requisite for so great a sphere, and had not been able to do all that might have been done with larger powers of control.'[2] The appeal took Lord Aberdeen wholly by surprise, as he had hitherto been under the impression that Lord John had preferred the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Palmerston for the War Department, when the appointment was originally made. He felt that, if Lord John were acting with the concurrence of Lord Palmerston, a break-up of the Government was inevitable; and he stated this as his conviction to the Queen, who saw at a glance, how disastrous were the consequences likely to ensue from such a state of things, at this critical period in the great struggle in which we were engaged.

The Minister at whom the attack was ostensibly directed at once placed himself at the disposal of his chief. In a Memorandum dated the 27th of November, the Prince records that the Duke of Newcastle, though 'deeply mortified at the reckless manner in which Lord John contemplated ruining his reputation and public position, begged most earnestly to be removed, if this were the only way to keep the Cabinet together.' But the Cabinet were in no way disposed to accept such a sacrifice; and Lord Palmerston himself, it was ascertained, regarded Lord John's proposition to concentrate the offices held by the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Sidney Herbert in one person, and that person himself, as impracticable, it being impossible for any one man to do the work of the two offices, both of which he knew well. Accordingly, in replying to Lord John Russell's proposition, Lord Aberdeen stated that, whatever question might fairly have been entertained in the first instance as to whether Lord Palmerston or the Duke of Newcastle were the better fitted for the office, 'it is a very different thing to displace a man, who has discharged its duties honourably and ably, merely in the belief that another might be found more efficient. Undoubtedly the public service must be the first object; but, in the absence of any proved defect or alleged incapacity, I can see no sufficient reason for such a change, which, indeed, I think is forbidden by a sense of justice and good faith.'[3]

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[2] Letter from Lord John Russell to Earl of Aberdeen, 25th November, 1854.

Finding that the Cabinet, including Lord Palmerston, concurred in the opinion thus expressed, Lord John Russell intimated his intention to resign at the end of the short autumn session then impending. The effect, if not indeed the object, of such a step, it was felt, must be to drive Lord Aberdeen from office. Had he consulted merely personal feeling, most willingly would Lord Aberdeen have resigned its cares to the hands of the ex-Premier, who had long shown so much anxiety to undertake them. But he knew well that his Cabinet would not accept Lord John Russell for their leader, and to abdicate would have been simply to throw matters into confusion. He therefore determined to remain at his post; and, if Lord John Russell adhered to his expressed intention, to replace him as leader of the House of Commons by Lord Palmerston,—an arrangement which had the full concurrence of the Sovereign. On maturer reflection, however, Lord John did not push matters to extremity, and on the 16th of December Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Queen, that in an interview with him that day, Lord John Russell 'admitted that he had changed his intention, and attributed this change chiefly to a conversation yesterday with Lord Panmure, who, although a great Military Reformer, had convinced him that the present was not a fitting time for the proposed changes.' Nothing but a sense of public duty overbearing all personal considerations could have reconciled Lord Aberdeen to accept this sudden submission of a rebellious colleague, which he felt 'gave no security for a single week.' But, as he wrote in the same letter, 'the scandal of a rupture would be so great, and the evils which might ensue are so incalculable, that he was sincerely convinced it would be most advantageous for Her Majesty's service and the public to endeavour, by a conciliatory and prudent course of conduct, to preserve tranquillity and union as long as possible.'

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[3] Letter from Earl of Aberdeen to Lord John Russell, 24th November, 1854.

The scandal, as events proved, was not to be concealed, nor the union to be preserved; but knowing, as Her Majesty did, how severe had been the strain upon the patience and self-sacrifice of Lord Aberdeen, she took the opportunity, in acknowledging his letter, of expressing how deeply she was 'impressed by the admirable temper, forbearance, and firmness with which Lord Aberdeen had conducted the whole of this very difficult and annoying transaction.'[4]

The blow which had menaced the existence of the Ministry was delayed, but not averted. It came from the same quarter, and at a time and in a manner that could not have been foreseen.

Parliament re-assembled on the 23rd of January. In the month which had elapsed since the close of the short autumn Session, the tide of public sympathy and indignation had been raised to the flood by the tidings of fresh sufferings from the seat of war. The Ministry were straining every nerve to apply the necessary remedies, but they were well aware that on the meeting of Parliament they would have to face a formidable attack, and probably a direct motion formally condemning their conduct of the war. 'Every conversation in every street, the leading articles in every newspaper, must have satisfied every man that such a motion was to be looked for.'[5] Meanwhile, Lord John Russell remained in office, and his colleagues heard from him no word of complaint or dissatisfaction with what was being done.

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[4] It was under the influence of this feeling, and a deep impression of the injustice of the attacks to which Lord Aberdeen was at this time daily exposed, that the Queen wrote to him on the 10th of January, 1855:

'Before Parliament meets, for probably a stormy Session, the Queen wishes to give a public testimony of her continued confidence in Lord Aberdeen's administration by offering him the vacant Blue Ribbon. The Queen need not add a word on her personal feelings of regard and friendship for Lord Aberdeen, which are known to him for now already a long period of years.' Lord Aberdeen at first hesitated to accept the honour, thinking that it might be better bestowed in another quarter; but he ultimately yielded, on Her Majesty's representation that his right to the distinction was paramount. He was installed at a Chapter of the Knights of the Garter on the 7th of February.

The very day the House met, several notices of motion were given, for the purpose of bringing the state of the army under critical review. The most formidable of these was one by Mr. Roebuck for the appointment of a Select Committee 'to inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it has been to minister to the wants of that army.' According to all precedent,—precedent founded upon the only sound principle of ministerial responsibility,—such a notice should have been the signal for the Ministry to close their ranks, and to vindicate with one accord the action of those of its members, on whom more particularly the conduct of the war had devolved. It was, therefore, with a feeling of no ordinary surprise that the Queen and the Cabinet received the intimation next day, that Lord John Russell had tendered his resignation, because 'he did not see how the motion was to be resisted.'

Lord John's letter, written on the day the notice of the motion was given, Lord Aberdeen informed the Queen personally on the 25th inst., had come without the slightest notice or warning, and he added that, whatever the cause for it might be, its object could only be to upset the Government. The Duke of Newcastle, he continued, on seeing Lord John's letter, had at once proposed that, as a victim seemed to be required to appease the public for the want of success in the Crimea, he was quite ready to be that victim, and entreated Lord Aberdeen to put his office into the hands of Lord Palmerston, who possessed the confidence of the nation. Lord Palmerston, while admitting that somehow or other the public had a notion that he would manage the War Department better than anybody else, protested that, as for himself, he did not expect to do it half so well as the Duke of Newcastle. Still, he would have been prepared to try it rather than let the Government be dissolved, which he considered would at this moment be a real calamity for the country. When, however, the matter had come before the Cabinet that day, the Whig members had not seen their way to carry on the Government without Lord John Russell, and had come to the determination to follow his example and to tender their resignations.

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[5] Speech of Lord Palmerston in House of Commons, 31st January, 1855.

Profoundly impressed by the difficulties which she apprehended in the formation of a new Ministry, the Queen protested against this decision, as exposing herself and the country to extreme peril, it being manifestly impossible to change the Government at such a moment without deranging the whole external policy in diplomacy and war. A break-up of the Government at this time would also exhibit to the world the humiliating spectacle of a disorganisation among our statesmen at home, akin to that which had become too palpable among our military men at the seat of war, and had already tended greatly to lower our *prestige* in the eyes of Europe. Her Majesty, therefore, urged Lord Aberdeen to make a further appeal to the Cabinet to stand by her, and he left her promising to do so to the best of his ability, but with little hope of success. The appeal was not made in vain, and in the evening of the same day Lord Aberdeen informed the Queen, that the Cabinet had agreed to retain office for the present, and to await the issue of the debate on Mr. Roebuck's motion.

This much, at least, it must have been clear to them, upon reflection, they were bound to do. With the challenge thrown down to them by Mr. Roebuck, what would have been said, had they shrunk from facing the judgment of Parliament on their past conduct? The considerations, which were expressed by Mr. Gladstone with his wonted eloquence a few nights afterwards, were too obvious to be overlooked :—

> 'If they had no spirit, what kind of epitaph would be placed over their remains? He would himself have thus written it: "Here lie the dishonoured ashes of a Ministry which found England at peace and left it at war, which was content to enjoy the emoluments of office and to wield the sceptre of power, so long as no man had the courage to question their existence. They saw the storm gathering over the country; they heard the agonising accounts which were almost daily received of the sick and wounded in the East. But had these things moved them? As soon, however, as the member for Sheffield raised his hand to point the thunderbolt, they shrank away conscience-stricken; the sense of guilt overwhelmed them, and to escape from punishment, they ran away from duty."'

If the Ministry had at any time a chance of success in resisting Mr. Roebuck's motion, they could have had none now, when so important a member of their body as Lord John Russell had given countenance to the worst that had been said against them, by his secession from their ranks the very day before that motion was to be discussed. Such a step was certain to be construed as a virtual admission that they had no defence to make. Nor were the opponents of the Ministry, however little they might approve the action of Lord John in abandoning his colleagues in the moment of danger, slow to avail themselves of the advantage which he had placed within their grasp. At the same time, he found little mercy at their hands. They asked with unanswerable force, if the system of military administration were so bad as he represented it to be, why during the many years when he had himself been at the head of affairs,—why especially in 1848 and 1849, when the dread of a French invasion had amounted almost to a panic,—had he made no movement towards its reform? Could he, moreover, when he had assented to the measures of the Government, hope to escape from bearing his share of discredit for these measures, if discredit there were, by leaving his colleagues to vindicate them against an attack for which he had himself given the cue? Was it seemly that he should break up the Ministry at the risk of discrediting us before our Allies, weakening us before our enemy, and endangering the league with Austria, so important for the future, which still hung wavering in the balance? Not even friendly critics could justify the step which Lord John Russell had taken, or gainsay the general opinion, that it was not calculated either to confer lustre upon a statesman who in past years had established many claims on the nation's regard, or to raise the character of Parliamentary government.

The debate on Mr. Roebuck's motion extended over two nights, ending in its being carried by a majority of 157, only 148 voting with Ministers, and 305, including a great number of the Liberal party, voting against them. The result seemed to take the House by surprise; the usual cheer of triumph was withheld, and in its stead came a murmur of amazement, followed by derisive laughter.

Next day (30th January) Lord Aberdeen placed the resignation of the Cabinet in the hands of the Queen. Lord Derby, as the leader of the party which was numerically the strongest, and by whose preponderance of votes Mr. Roebuck's motion had been carried, was forthwith summoned to the Palace. He came next day, and in the interview which ensued disclaimed all responsibility for what had happened, saying that there had been no communication with Mr. Roebuck, but that his followers could not help voting for the motion, when Lord John Russell told them, on authority, that there was the most ample cause for inquiry, and the whole country cried out for it. His party, he owned, was the most compact, mustering in number about 250, but it wanted men capable of governing the House of Commons, and, unless strengthened by other combinations, he could not hope to present an administration that would be accepted by the country. He was aware that the whole country cried out for Lord Palmerston as the only fit man to carry on the war with success, and he acknowledged the necessity of having him in the Ministry, were it only to satisfy the French Government, whose confidence it was of the greatest importance to secure. Lord Derby did not concur in the general opinion as to Lord Palmerston's fitness for the War Office, but he might have the lead of the House of Commons, which Mr. Disraeli was ready to give up to him. At the same time, even if Lord Palmerston joined him, he could not hope to meet the House of Commons without the assistance of the Peelites. Unless, therefore, he could obtain this, he could not undertake the task of forming a government, and he suggested that Her Majesty might in that event attempt other combinations with Lord John Russell, and Lord Lansdowne, and their friends. 'Should all attempts fail, however, he would be ready to come forward to the rescue of the country with such materials as he had, but it would be "a desperate attempt."'

By the next day Lord Derby had ascertained, that he could not count on more than 'an independent support' from Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert, which, he told the Queen, reminded him of the definition of the independent M.P., viz. one that could not be depended on.

He could not, therefore, undertake the task which Her Majesty had proposed to him.

'After Lord Derby had taken leave of the Queen,' the Prince records in a Memorandum the same day, 'with reiterated assurances of gratitude and loyalty, I had a long conversation with him, pointing out to him facts with which he could not be familiar, concerning our army in the Crimea, our relations with our ally, negotiations with the German Courts, the state of public men and the press in this country, which convinced me that the country was in a crisis of the greatest magnitude, and the Crown in the greatest difficulties, and that these could not be successfully overcome, unless political parties would manifest a little more patriotism than hitherto. They behaved a good deal like his independent M.P., and tried to aggravate every little mishap in order to snatch party advantages out of it.' The Prince communicated to Lord Derby some striking illustrations of the effect which had thus been produced in lowering us in the eyes of foreign Governments. Lord Derby rejoined by quoting a remark of Count Walewski's which had reached him as to our position at the impending Vienna Conferences:—'What influence can a country like England pretend to exercise, which has no army and no government?' 'I told him,' says the Prince, 'Walewski was right, as every one here took pains to prove, that we had no army, and to contrive that the Queen should have no government. He promised to do what he could to relieve the difficulties of the country.'[6]

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[6] We may cite, as one indication among many, which reached the Prince at this time, of the construction put upon the stories so lavishly published by ourselves of the state of matters in the English camp, the report from one of the shrewdest observers in Europe, who was, moreover, in a position to hear what was said in the most influential quarters abroad. 'Everywhere the remark is to be heard—"England as a great Power is to be feared no more. She never can find men enough to carry on the war effectually, although she may effect great exploits." The Russians everywhere are in the highest spirits. The Emperor Nicholas has written to his sister, "She may rely on his assurance, Sebastopol will never be taken."'

The Queen now turned to Lord Lansdowne for assistance, but all he had to say merely served to show that Her Majesty had only too well foreseen the difficulties that must arise from the displacement of the late Administration. Lord John Russell, it seemed, was under the belief—a belief not shared, however, by Lord Lansdowne—that he could form a strong Ministry, even without the support of the Peelites. That they would not serve under him was certain; indeed, it was more than doubtful whether they would even serve with him. Again, Lord Palmerston, Lord Lansdowne believed, would not take office under Lord John Russell, but would himself be ready to form an Administration. This, however, unless it included Lord John, would certainly fall to pieces. Both would be willing to serve under Lord Lansdowne himself, but he was seventy-five, crippled with the gout, and could not undertake such a task except for a few months, when the Administration would again break down, and all be again confusion. As matters stood, no effective combination could, in his opinion, be formed until Lord John Russell had the opportunity afforded him of trying what he could do. He would undoubtedly fail, but his failure would at least silence the opposition which would otherwise be raised by his followers and himself. In these circumstances the Queen considered that one course was alone open to her. Next to Lord Derby and his followers, Lord John Russell had caused the overthrow of the late Government. Lord Derby had declined to undertake the task of organising a Cabinet to succeed them, and, according to all constitutional usage, she was now entitled and bound to ask Lord John Russell to extricate her from her present embarrassment.

In adopting this course, however, the Queen thought it right to place on record the reasons which had influenced her determination. She accordingly wrote to Lord John Russell as follows:—

'Buckingham Palace, 2nd February, 1855.

'The Queen has just seen Lord Lansdowne after his return from his conference with Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston. As moments are precious, and the time is rolling on without the various consultations which Lord Lansdowne has had the kindness and patience to hold with the various persons composing the Queen's late Government having led to any positive result, she feels that she ought to entrust some one of them with the distinct commission to attempt the formation of a Government. The Queen addresses herself in this instance to Lord John Russell as the person who may be considered to have contributed to the vote of the House of Commons which displaced her last Government, and hopes that he will be able to present to her such a Government as will give a fair promise successfully to overcome the great difficulties in which the country is placed.

'It would give her particular satisfaction if Lord Palmerston would join in this formation.'

Lord Palmerston was much gratified by the wish thus expressed in regard to himself, proving as it did that the unpleasant incidents of former years were not remembered by the Sovereign to his disadvantage. In an audience, which he requested in consequence of the message conveyed to him through Lord John Russell, he let this be seen. He assured the Queen of his readiness to serve Her Majesty in any way he could under the present difficulties. He had no objection to take office under Lord John, but having a choice between the War Department and the lead of the House of Commons, he declared his preference for the latter. The duties of both offices were, in his opinion, too heavy for one man to perform. It would, however, be an essential condition that Lord Clarendon should remain at the Foreign Office.

Her Majesty had by this time learned from Lord John Russell himself that he too considered the co-operation of Lord Clarendon to be indispensable. She therefore sent for him to ascertain whether it might be hoped for. From what passed it was manifest that it could not. Lord Clarendon considered that it was idle in Lord John to attempt to form a Government. No one, either of his own party in the late Government, or of the general public, believed he could do so. Even if he did get one together, it would be 'still-born' and 'trodden under foot' the very first day of its existence, composed as it would be of the same men who had been bankrupt in 1852, minus two of the best of their number—viz. Lord Lansdowne and Lord Grey—and with the head of it irretrievably damaged in the eyes of the public by his recent proceedings. Were he (Lord Clarendon) to remain at the Foreign Office, his language to foreign countries would lose all its weight, because it would be known not to rest upon public opinion. What, moreover, would be thought of him were he to accept as his leader the man who, while in the late Ministry, had steadily worked for the overthrow of Lord Aberdeen and his Peelite colleagues, and for the reinstatement in office of an exclusively Whig Ministry? He would be no party to such an arrangement. The conduct of all his colleagues towards himself had been most straightforward and honourable, and loyalty to them forbade any alliance with one of whom they had such well-founded reason to complain.

Meanwhile, the conviction was being painfully brought home to Lord John Russell that the task which he had undertaken with alacrity was desperate. He probably neither hoped nor greatly cared to secure the adhesion of the Peelites, but when one by one his own familiar friends—Sir George Grey, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Clarendon—declined to place themselves under his lead, his eyes were opened to the fact, of which they had all along been fully conscious, that his political position was for the moment too gravely compromised for any stable Ministry to be established under his guidance. The true state of affairs was quickly ascertained, and he had no alternative but to resign into Her Majesty's hands the task with which he had been entrusted less than forty-eight hours before.

The Ministerial crisis had practically begun with his resignation of office on the 23rd of January. The 4th of February was now reached, and the country was still without a Government. This was producing the worst effect abroad. That very day Lord Cowley wrote from Paris to Lord Clarendon: 'I wish to heaven that a Government of some sort was formed. I cannot exaggerate the mischief that the state of things is causing to our reputation as a nation, or the disrepute into which it is bringing Constitutional Government.'

In this dilemma the Queen lost not a moment in addressing herself to Lord Palmerston, and asking him whether he could 'undertake to form an Administration which would command the confidence of Parliament and efficiently conduct public affairs in this momentous crisis.' Lord Palmerston had throughout this anxious time shown so genuine a public spirit that, even if his own great ability and experience, as well as the public voice, had not designated him as worthy of the trust, the Queen would have felt bound to place it in his hands.[7] It was at once accepted, and in the course of the next day he reported that Lord Lansdowne, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Clarendon, Lord Granville, Sir George Grey, and Sir Charles Wood had agreed to take office under him. Mr. Gladstone, Mr. S. Herbert, and the Duke of Argyle had declined, on the ground of personal and political attachment to Lord Aberdeen, against whom, as well as against the Duke of Newcastle, they considered the adverse vote of the House of Commons to have been levelled. Both these noblemen, however, on hearing of their refusal, had exerted themselves strongly to prevail upon their friends to change their opinion; and next day the Queen had the satisfaction to learn from Lord Aberdeen that they had yielded to his representations, and placed themselves in his hands.

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[7] 'I am backed by the general opinion of the whole country, and I have no reason to complain of the least want of cordiality or confidence on the part of the Court.'—Lord Palmerston to his brother, Sir William Temple, 15th February, 1855. Ashley's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 771.

Lord Palmerston had good reason to appreciate the generosity with which his old chief had interposed to remove this formidable impediment to his success.[8] Nor was Her Majesty less grateful; and, in her letter (6th February) announcing to Lord Aberdeen that Lord Palmerston had just kissed hands upon his appointment as Premier, she told him that she was now 'relieved from great anxiety and difficulty, and felt that she owed much to Lord Aberdeen's kind and disinterested assistance.'

With the exception of Lord Aberdeen, the Duke of Newcastle, and Lord John Russell, the new Cabinet was identical with that which it succeeded, the only material addition being Lord Panmure as Secretary at War. It was hoped that the Government would now be free to address themselves to the great questions of the hour,—the vigorous prosecution of the war, and the relief of the army, of which the worst accounts continued to be received. Thus, when the 10th of February came round,—the fifteenth anniversary of the Royal marriage,—the anxieties of the last few weeks had been somewhat relieved. Again the Royal children had a pleasant festival ready for the day, and the Prince records that 'in the evening they performed their piece "Little Red Riding Hood" extremely well, followed by a tableau, and occasional verses spoken by Alice.' Among the congratulations which reached Her Majesty, those of Colonel Phipps, the Keeper of the Queen's Privy Purse, and also Treasurer to the Prince, had a special value, as coming from one who had intimate reason to know the noble qualities of the Prince :—

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[8] Mr. Ashley quotes (vol. ii. p. 80) a letter of Lord Palmerston to Lord Aberdeen, which is the best of all evidence that the charge against Lord Aberdeen, that he had *driven* Lord Palmerston from office in December 1853, which has recently been advanced by Mr. Kinglake, is unfounded (*Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. ii. pp. 28, 29, 30.). Would Lord Aberdeen have tried to install as Premier a man whom, a year before, he had 'driven' from office, or would Lord Palmerston have not merely accepted, but courted the help of the man who had so treated him? See how he writes:—'12th February, 1855. I called at your door yesterday, and was sorry not to have found you at home. I wanted to say how much I have to thank you for your handsome conduct, and for your friendly and energetic exertions in removing the difficulties which I at first experienced in my endeavour to reconstitute the Government in such a manner as to combine in it all the strength which, in the circumstances of the moment, it was possible to bring together. I well know, that without your assistance that most desirable and important combination could not have been effected.'—*Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 80.

> 'It is hardly necessary,' he wrote, 'to declare how sincere must be the congratulations to Your Majesty personally from any one who has the happiness to be admitted to a confidential position in Your Majesty's family. But it is as an Englishman that Colonel Phipps feels he has almost a claim to express his feelings of rejoicing upon the day which conferred upon his country the inestimable blessing of the presence of the Prince in the position he holds. Colonel Phipps believes, not from his heart merely, but from more sober experience and matured judgment, that it is perfectly impossible to estimate the value of his Royal Highness as Consort to Your Majesty.
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> 'It would be much to deserve the gratitude of a nation, that the family of Your Majesty exhibits a pattern which may be well imitated by the best of Your Majesty's subjects ; but it is only those who come into contact with his Royal Highness, who are fully aware of the amount of ability and judgment, joined to the most undeviating singleness of purpose and probity

of mind, by which Your Majesty is assisted upon occasions like that which has just passed.'

When it was found that the new Cabinet was virtually the same as Lord Aberdeen's, those who had been most active in displacing him were far from being conciliated. It had been thought that they would have been appeased by the sacrifice of the two chief objects of their hostility, and that no further action would be taken upon Mr. Roebuck's motion. How such a belief ever came to be entertained it is not easy to see. Having declared the necessity for inquiry by overwhelming numbers, what had occurred to make the House of Commons recede from its decision? Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle had indeed been driven from office. But the condition of affairs remained the same, with the difference that the statements which they had made to the House of Lords in announcing their resignation on the 1st of February had created a revulsion of feeling in their favour. Doubts had even begun to arise in the minds of their bitterest opponents, whether they had not been mistaken in attacking the men, when it was not they that were in fault, but the system by which they were hampered. In this mood the majority were not likely to listen to arguments, however sound or eloquently enforced, that it was unconstitutional to transfer to a committee of the House of Commons what were strictly the functions of the Executive. An appeal to the House by Lord Palmerston on the 16th of February, if not to reverse, at least to suspend its decision, was met by the most decided indications that it was determined to adhere to its former resolution, and Mr. Roebuck gave notice of his intention to move the appointment of his Committee forthwith. After this, resistance was impossible, as it could only be followed by a defeat and a fresh Ministerial crisis. The country was bent on having the inquiry, and therefore it was that the House of Commons insisted upon it, and not from hostility to the new Ministry. Had such hostility existed, the House, it was felt, would not have voted, as they had just done, largely increased Estimates without a murmur for the purpose of increasing the strength of both army and navy.

These considerations, however, although they prevailed with the majority of the Cabinet, were not sufficient to outweigh the objections of Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert to the proposed investigation, which they regarded as a dangerous breach of a great constitutional principle, after which it would be impossible for the Executive ever again to oppose any demand for inquiry, however unreasonable. They therefore announced their intention to retire from the Ministry,—a step, perhaps, less to be wondered at, seeing that they had joined it with manifest reluctance, and probably felt that they were regarded by the Whig party, on which the strength of the Cabinet mainly rested, with all the jealousy of men sore at being kept out of office by those whom they scarcely regarded as friends. In this resolution they were followed by Mr. Cardwell; and, within a fortnight from the formation of Lord Palmerston's Government, the country learned, with surprise and mortification, that it was broken up by the secession of several of its most influential members.

On the 23rd, the usual explanations were made to the House of Commons. From these it was easy to gather that, beyond the immediate question in dispute, there were wide divergences of opinion between the Government and its late colleagues, which must speedily have drawn them further apart, and which, indeed, soon afterwards took the form of decided hostility. Lord Palmerston was able, however, to triumph over the difficulties which had come upon him so unexpectedly, and by the 28th the names of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, Lord John Russell, Mr. Vernon Smith, and Lord

Stanley of Alderley were announced as having been selected to fill the vacant places.[9]

If weakened by the change in intellectual vigour and administrative experience, the Cabinet had at least gained in unity of purpose and action. In the present crisis this was of primary importance, as giving assurance of that resolute and energetic action, which could alone restore confidence and tranquillity to the country. How necessary this was may be inferred from the following passage in a letter from the Prince to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, written on the 23rd, when the excitement occasioned by the secession of Sir James Graham and his friends was at its height:—

> 'Things have gone mad here, the political world is quite crazy, and the Court is the only institution which does not lose its tranquil bearing. Nevertheless, the people will soon come to their senses again. The press, which for its own ends exaggerates the sufferings of our troops in the Crimea, has made the nation quite furious. It is bent upon punishing all and sundry, and cannot find the right person, because he does not exist.'

In the midst of all the pressure of political cares at home and abroad, the Prince still found time to think of the to him more congenial arts of peace. On the 28th his Diary records that he presided that day at a meeting of the Exhibition Commission, and drew up for the Government a proposal to purchase a portion of the Bernal Collection—a purchase, that laid the foundation of the great Museum of Art and Manufactures at South Kensington, which has now become one of the most important and interesting in Europe.

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[9] The narrative of the Ministerial crisis given in this Chapter has been prepared from very elaborate Memoranda, drawn up by the Prince from day to day, while it lasted.

CHAPTER LXI.

The Prince had good reason for what he said when he wrote that, while the nation and political parties were in a state of frenzy about the miseries of our army in the Crimea, the Court was 'the only institution which had not lost its tranquil bearing.' This was due neither to want of sympathy with the sufferings of our soldiers, nor to ignorance of the causes from which they sprang. But the very fulness of the information of which the Queen and Prince were in possession enabled them to estimate these causes truly, to measure the extent of the evils they had produced, and, at the same time, to feel assured that they were not only remediable, but that the remedies were now in course of being energetically applied.

If we had suffered, our Allies, despite the superiority of their army system, on which the English journals dwelt with exaggerated emphasis, had suffered also. Their forces engaged in the siege being so much larger than ours, the burden of the labour in the trenches, which had done so much to exhaust the already enfeebled strength of our men, had fallen lightly upon theirs.[1] They had also been put to fewer straits for supplies, having two harbours to draw them from, both nearer to their lines than Balaclava was to ours, and both approached by good roads. Still they, no less than ourselves, had run short of forage; their loss in horses had consequently been enormous. Their rations were upon occasion so short, that the soldiers frequently bought biscuits from our men, and the sickness and mortality in their camp had been much greater than in our own. Even with the advantage of an organised transport and field-hospital service, they had found their system fail them in many respects under the peculiar circumstances of the siege. Little, however, was known about their shortcomings outside the highest official circles, for they had not 'among them a privileged set of censors to put the worst construction upon every inconvenience and evil; nor had they a class of officers who think it becoming to fill the public prints with exaggeration and abuse.'[2]

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[1] In a letter among the Prince's papers from Miss Nightingale, writing from Balaclava to a friend, on the 10th of May, 1855, she says:—'Fancy working five nights out of seven in the trenches! Fancy being thirty-six hours in them at a stretch, as they were all December, lying down, or half lying down, often forty-eight hours, with no food but *raw* salt pork sprinkled with sugar, rum, and biscuit; nothing hot, because the exhausted soldier could not collect his own fuel, as he was expected to do, to cook his own ration: and fancy through all this the army preserving their courage and patience as

While writers in England were doing their utmost to discredit those on whom the responsibility of conducting the siege rested, and to persuade our far from friendly critics throughout Europe that England's military power was no longer to be feared,[3] such was not the view taken by the ablest French officers upon the spot. Thus, for example, Colonel Vico, the French Commissioner attached to Lord Raglan's Staff,[4] writing home to Marshal Vaillant from before Sebastopol, on the 23rd of January, 1855, says, in allusion

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they have done, and being now eager (the old ones more than the young ones) to be led even into the trenches. There was something sublime in the spectacle.'

[2] Memorandum by Sir John Burgoyne given to Lord Raglan, dated 'Camp before Sebastopol, 7th February, 1855.'—Wrottesley's *Life and Correspondence of Sir J. Burgoyne*, vol. ii. p. 214.

[3] See note 3, p. 204 *ante*. Was it to be wondered at, if foreigners came to such conclusions, when in Parliament such language as this was not uncommon?—'The country stood on the brink of ruin—it had fallen into the abyss of disgrace, and become the laughing-stock of Europe.'—Mr. Layard, in House of Commons, 19th February, 1855.

[4] This distinguished officer died, deeply regretted, at General Simpson's head-quarters, of cholera, on the 10th of July, 1855, a few days after Lord Raglan himself.

to the attacks on Lord Raglan and his staff by a portion of the English press, that the state of things complained of

'Is the fault of the system, and not that of the Commander-in-chief or of those about him. This is felt to be the truth by everybody here. . . . To judge by what is said in the English journals, the situation of our allies is much worse than it is in fact—and advantage is sure to be taken of those misrepresentations to revive the spirits (*remonter le moral*) of the Russian army. The truth is, that they have suffered more than we have for the reasons I have already explained' [want of transport, and of a corps d'intendance, &c.], 'and for want of means of transport they have found it impossible to be in the same state of forwardness as ourselves. But their army is very far from having ceased to be of any practical help, as some would have it be believed, and, were the enemy to appear, he would find they would give him quite enough to do (*il trouverait bien à qui parler de leur côté*).'

By the time the mingled indignation and despondency at home had culminated in the vote which put an end to Lord Aberdeen's Administration, a decided improvement had taken place in the condition of the army before Sebastopol. Considerable reinforcements had arrived, picquet and trench duty had been more widely distributed, the men were thus better rested, in better health, in better spirits, more warmly clad and better housed. The railway was making progress, and now the fine weather had begun to set in. The tidings of the despondency which prevailed in England, therefore, came with surprise upon the army itself, and they read with astonishment, not unmixed with bitterness, of the suggestions which were freely made by the press, that the only way to save them was to put them under the command of the French for the purposes of reorganisation.

'The statements made by the press in England,' Sir John Burgoyne writes from the camp on the 13th of March, 'repeated in Parliament, and uncontradicted by Ministers, of the dreadful condition of this army, strike us with astonishment here. . . . It has been stated in the newspapers, and by many members of

Parliament, that by the middle of March, or in about a month from the period of their speeches in February, there would be no British army left in the Crimea. . . . It is the fashion to talk of the army as consisting of 10,000 or 12,000 men. . . . As soon as a new organisation for the field shall come into operation, ... you will find an army of at least 24,000 or 25,000 men ready to take the field, from "*the miserable remnants of the British army now in the Crimea;*" and I can assure you that the men are beginning to look tolerably hearty and cheerful again. Hitherto, they have been seldom disturbed in wearing their sheepskin coats, fur caps, or anything they thought would add to their comfort. Now you see regiments and detachments turning out in the most respectable order, in their red coats, and looking the fine British soldier again; Sir George Brown has even begun to call for the stiff stock to be resumed.

'The above is a more cheering account than you have been accustomed to contemplate. Is it possible, that Ministers are not aware of it, and do not see it in that light? At the same time I am, like everybody else, fully sensible of the hardships and severe sufferings that the troops have undergone.'[5]

The Ministry, no less than the Queen and Prince, were of course well aware of the facts mentioned by Sir John Burgoyne, and they knew that what had already been done by the Duke of Newcastle, and what was in course of being done by his successor at the War Office, would go far to redress what still remained of the evils which had brought so much distress on the British forces. In this there was enough to engage the whole attention of the army department at home. It was natural, therefore, that they should look with no great favour on the inquiry which the House of Commons had delegated to Mr. Roebuck's Committee. The additional labour which such an investigation was sure to throw upon officials already overtasked was something to be dreaded. Still this would have been cheerfully borne, could they have believed that the inquiry would lead to valuable practical results. But the Government were already fully aware, from miserable experience, of the weak places in our military system, which it needed no Committee to establish. Committee or no Committee, the Government were alone responsible to the nation for seeing that these defects were removed, and no inquiry could advance this, the one all-important object. Our failure hitherto had been clearly due to the fact that we had commenced a great war with inadequate means, and that with these inadequate means we had attempted more than our army could possibly execute.[6] Men who thought calmly felt that the nation, in its impatience for decisive action, was not without its share of the responsibility for this grave mistake, and that it would be hopeless, as well as unfair, to attempt to fix it upon the individuals against whom the public anger had been assiduously pointed.

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[5] Sir J. Burgoyne to Captain Matson, R.E.—*Life and Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 274.

Although as little inclined as Sir James Graham and his friends to approve the appointment of the Committee, either on the ground of constitutional principle or of practical utility, the Government determined to afford every facility for its inquiries. The country should have no reason to complain that any information was withheld. It should also know everything the Committee itself knew. There was not a flaw in our system, a weakness in our disposable forces, which had not been published to our enemies as well as to ourselves. When, therefore, Mr. Roebuck, supported by the majority of his Committee, moved the House of Commons (2nd March) to make the Committee one of Secrecy, it was so generally acknowledged that no valid reason for this could be urged, that the motion was not pressed to a division.

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[6] See on this subject an admirable speech by General Peel (19th February) in the Debate in the House of Commons on Mr. Layard's motion for a Committee of Inquiry on the Army Estimates.

This point having been settled, the Committee at once entered upon their inquiry. It began on the 5th of March, and was continued from day to day, with only the intermission of the Easter holidays, until the 18th of June. Notwithstanding these lengthened sittings, the Committee were in the end, as their Report bears, 'compelled to end an inquiry which they had been unable satisfactorily to complete,' partly from the absence of important witnesses on active service, and partly from restrictions imposed upon the Committee itself 'by considerations of State policy.' Very early in their proceedings, they seem to have felt misgivings as to the probability of their inquiry leading to the results which had been anticipated. But, if they started with the idea that the calamities of the campaign were due to sinister influences at head-quarters, as it will presently be shown that some of them did, every step in their researches could only end in disappointment.

That this idea was seriously entertained, and that the Prince Consort was the delinquent to whom the suspicions of certain members of the Committee pointed, will create as much surprise to our readers now as it did to the Prince himself, when he first learned it in the interview of which he has preserved a record in the following Memorandum:—

'Buckingham Palace, 8th March, 1855.

'The Duke of Newcastle told me yesterday evening that Mr Roebuck had been with him, and had asked him, whether he had any objection to being examined? The Duke replied, that he had the strongest on public grounds, thinking it most dangerous and injurious to the public service, but this question seemed to have been disposed of between the Government and the House of Commons; on private grounds he was most anxious to be examined. Mr. Roebuck, after further conversation, told him that the conviction upon the minds of the Committee was daily gaining strength, that they would be able to discover very little here;—that the key to many mysteries could only be found at the head-quarters, and that in a high quarter there had been a determination that the expedition should not succeed, which had been suggested to the head-quarters. The Duke said, "Now I must be careful how I talk further with you, as I see you are laying the ground for an impeachment, as you can only mean me by a *high quarter*." "Oh no!" answered Mr. Roebuck, "I mean a much higher personage than you; I mean Prince Albert."

'The Duke was amazed, and did not know whether he was to be more astounded at the wickedness or the folly of such a belief. He told Mr. Roebuck that he had a press full of letters from me in the very room where they met, and was almost tempted to show him some of them, as they gave conclusive evidence of my intense anxiety for the success of the expedition; and he continued, "If during the time of my official duties I have received any suggestions which were more valuable to me than others, they did not come from your friends the Napiers, but from Prince Albert."

'Mr. Roebuck said he was very much astonished at what the Duke said, and that it had not been his belief only.

'The Duke proceeded further to reason with him, and, amongst other grounds to show him the stupidity of such a belief, he referred to the fact of the Queen's and my entire union in public matters, of the influence my advice naturally had with the Queen, of the Queen's having suffered materially in health from anxiety about her troops; and yet it was to be supposed that all this time I had been working behind her back to produce that misery to myself! Mr. Roebuck said they knew about the Queen's anxiety, as, when Lord Cardigan had been at Windsor, he had had the Royal children upon his knees, and they said, "You must hurry back to Sebastopol, and take it, else it will kill Mama!!!" Can such stupidity be credited?

'Mr. Roebuck lamented the appointment of Lord Raglan, who was unfit to command in the field, and whose services at home would have been most valuable, and attributed his appointment to my wish to get rid of him, in order to keep Lord Hardinge quite alone, with whom I could do what I pleased!! The Duke told him *he* had selected Lord Raglan, and conferred with Lord Hardinge upon it long before either the Queen or myself had been made acquainted with the fact, and suggested, How was it for me afterwards to bring about the ruin of the army through the very man, who must have considered himself injured by me?

'The Duke asked me whether he could do or say anything that I might wish? I replied that I did not see what could be said or done. We could not make people either virtuous or wise, and must only regret the monstrous degree to which their aberration extended. I must rest mainly upon a good conscience, and the belief that, during the fifteen years of my connection with this country, I had not given a human soul the means of imputing to me the want of sincerity or patriotism. I myself had the conviction that the Queen and myself were perhaps the only two persons in the kingdom who had no other interest, thought, or desire than the good, the honour, and the power of the country; and this not unnaturally, as no *private* interest can be thought of which could interfere with these considerations.

'I thought it right to keep this record of what the Duke told me, as a proof that the *will* at least to injure me is never wanting in certain circles, and that the gullibility of the public has no bounds.'

To use the Prince's own words, 'things must indeed have gone mad' in England, before the suspicions against him expressed by Mr. Roebuck could have found any reasonable men even to repeat, much less to entertain them. What he now learned must have made it painfully clear, that the venom of the misrepresentations which had been so industriously propagated against him in 1853 still rankled in many minds. Slanders are hard to kill; and the antagonism which pre-eminent worth arouses in base natures continued to find vent in detraction and innuendo then, and indeed long afterwards.[7] Shakspeare's aphorism that 'Back-wounding calumny the whitest virtue strikes,' could scarcely receive a more signal illustration. Its force will be felt by all who have followed the details, necessarily scanty although they be, which we have been able to give, of what the Prince had done to secure by energetic prosecution of the war the triumph of public law

[7] It may be convenient here once for all to dispose of perhaps the only calumny, of the many to which the Prince was subjected, which, so far as we are aware, keeps any hold upon the public mind, viz., that he had amassed large sums of money out of the income allowed him by the nation, part of which had been invested in the purchase of land at South Kensington, adjoining the property of the Exhibition Commissioners. The Prince never purchased any land at South Kensington either for himself or his family. Connected as he was with the acquisition of ground there for purely national purposes, the thought of acquiring property in the same locality for personal purposes would never have entered his mind, or the mind indeed of any honourable man. But, in truth, the Prince never had the means to make purchases of this nature. His whole income was no more than sufficient to meet the salaries of his secretaries and other officials and servants, his public subscriptions, and such purchases of works of art as were expected from him. He was often blamed, because these purchases were not on a larger scale. The fault was not with him, but in the very limited means at his disposal, and as to these his only regret was, that they did not enable him to do for art and science all that he would have wished. It was only by strict economy, that the year's current expenditure was made to square with the year's income, and the Prince died, *leaving absolutely no fortune;* indeed, barely enough to meet his personal liabilities. And yet even recently we were assured, upon the authority of an eminent statesman, who survived the Prince many years, and who professed to speak from personal knowledge, that he left behind in one of his investments no less a sum than 600,000*l.*! The statesman in question was not always exact in his statements, and he was never less exact, or more inexcusably so, than in this instance. But if a man, whose position gave weight to his words, could propagate so mere a fable, it becomes necessary to give it, and all stories of the same kind, an emphatic denial.

and the maintenance of European peace, for which he believed it to be waged. The written evidence of these efforts, in his communications with the Duke of Newcastle and other members of the Government, was overwhelming.

The Duke of Newcastle's successor, Lord Panmure, soon experienced the same advantage as the Duke in the wise and energetic counsels, and accurate knowledge, of the Prince. Measures, as he found, had already been taken by his predecessor for improving the state of things both in the Crimea and in the Hospital Service on the Bosphorus. A Land Transport Corps, under the direction of Colonel MacMurdo, had been organised by the Duke of Newcastle among the last acts of his administration. A Commission, at the head of which were Colonel Tulloch and Sir John MacNeill, was despatched to the Crimea to inquire into the organisation of the Commissariat and other departments, which had proved unequal to the strain upon them. The sanitary condition of the camp, as well as of the hospitals and barracks, also received the attention of separate Commissions. The want of unity and the mischievous delays which had arisen from the conflict of various Departments, were remedied by abolishing the Board of Ordnance, and concentrating the whole civil administration of the army in the Secretary of State for War, and the military administration in the Commander-in-Chief. The announcement of these and other measures for securing the efficient conduct of the campaign, revived the public confidence, by creating the assurance that the resources would not be wasted, which the nation was now more resolved than ever to put forth for the prosecution of the war to a decisive close.

Conferences with a view to peace on the basis of the Four Points were about to be opened at Vienna, and Lord John Russell had gone there as our representative.[8] By this arrangement Lord Palmerston conciliated one who might have proved a doubtful ally, if not even a dangerous adversary, and gave him at the same time an opportunity to retrieve the reputation which had been not a little impaired by his recent proceedings. However greatly these might have been disapproved, the country could not doubt that Lord John Russell might be trusted in the impending negotiations only to entertain terms in which the honour of the country was fully maintained, and reasonable guarantees given for the permanent peace, which it had been the object of the Allies in entering upon the war to secure. That such terms would be conceded by Russia, until she was crippled by defeats more severe than any she had yet sustained, the statesmen who knew her best did not venture to anticipate. It was true that she had agreed to treat on the footing of the Four Points. But it was hard to reconcile her ostensible acceptance of these now with all her former declarations. So lately as the 26th of August, 1854, Count Nesselrode had, in a Despatch to Prince Gortschakoff, expressly refused to enter into negotiations on the basis of the Four Points, because they could not be interpreted, except in the sense which we had since expressed in terms. He had at the same time stated, that Russia would assent to them only if she were *in extremis*, and then only for the moment, as she would never abide by a peace concluded on such a footing. Nothing had occurred since to make it probable that these views had been modified. Some distrust in the sincerity of Russia's acceptance of the basis for the Conference was therefore not unnatural. At the same time, the negotiations were entered upon with a sincere desire on the part of the Allies to conclude a peace if possible; and, as the operations of war were in the meantime in no way relaxed, the turn of events might at any moment bear down the opposition, against which the arguments of mere diplomacy would be powerless.

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[8] While on his way there he was offered and accepted the office of Colonial Secretary, which had become vacant by the retirement of Mr. Sidney Herbert.

The announcement of the unexpected death of the Czar on the 2nd of March of pulmonic apoplexy, induced by an attack of influenza, struck the people of England with surprise. Nothing had been heard of his illness, and it was with a feeling of awe,[9] and not of exultation, that they learned that the indomitable will, in baffling which so many a British home had been made desolate, could no longer issue menace or command. Silistria, Alma, Balaclava, Inkermann, all rose up to men's minds, and they thought of the bitter lessons which each of these must have read to the 'imperious Cæsar' of the North, and how they must have helped to break down his iron frame. More bitter than all, however, must have been the defeat of his legions at Eupatoria on the 18th of February by the Turks, whom he despised. The details of this attack, in which upwards of 40,000 Russians, under General Liprandi, were engaged, and which was beaten back by a much smaller force under Omar Pasha, supported with great effect by the fire of several ships of war from the Allied fleets, reached the Czar on the 1st of March. Soon after he became slightly delirious, and fatal symptoms set in. His thoughts to the last were with his soldiers at Sebastopol, to whom he sent his thanks for their heroic defence. But his supreme anxiety was to secure the continuance of Prussia in the policy of which the Western Powers had already had so much reason to complain; and his last injunctions to the Empress were, 'Tell my dear Fritz (the King of Prussia) to continue the friend of Russia, and faithful to the last words of Papa[10] (*les dernières paroles de Papa*).'

The prospects of peace were thought by some to be brought nearer by this event; but only by those who had not learned, from history or the study of mankind, how little the death of any individual can influence a question of war or peace, when the pride and policy of a nation are at issue. The manifesto published by the present Emperor on the day of his accession (2nd March) was sufficient to show, that with the crown he inherited the policy of his father. 'May we,' it bore, 'under the guidance and protection of Providence, consolidate Russia in the highest degree of power and glory; that through us may be accomplished the views and desires of our illustrious predecessors, Peter, Catherine, Alexander the well-beloved, and of our august father of imperishable memory!' 'Power and glory,' in the connection in which they were here presented, could only be read to mean military supremacy, applied in conquest of other lands, not that 'highest degree of power and glory' which would have been won by developing the resources, and enlarging the freedom and happiness of an Empire already vast enough for any healthy ambition. A few days later (10th March) Count Nesselrode, in a Despatch addressed to the Russian diplomatic agents abroad, stated that his Sovereign would join the deliberations of the Vienna Conference 'in a sincere spirit of concord.' But this document was studiously silent as to the limitation of the power of Russia in the Black Sea, which formed one of the celebrated Four Points; and, as it was well known, that the late Emperor had to the last declared he would neither consent to the dismantling of Sebastopol, nor to the restriction of his navy in the Euxine,[11] and there was no reason to believe that any change of view had taken place at St. Petersburg, while the Allies on the other hand were determined to insist on both conditions, the 'spirit of concord,' of which Count Nesselrode spoke, could avail little towards a peaceful settlement.

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[9] Which, in the case of the Queen, was mixed with regret, as she entertained a sincere regard for the Emperor Nicholas personally.—Note by the Queen.

[10] These last words were 'an injunction to maintain, under all contingencies, the principles of the Holy Alliance.' (Despatch by Lord Bloomfield from Berlin to Lord Clarendon, 6th March, 1855.)

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[11] This was communicated by Lord Bloomfield to Lord Clarendon in a Despatch, dated 28th February, 1855.

By this time large numbers of the troops who had been disabled by wounds or sickness had returned to this country. The Queen and Prince took the earliest opportunity of ascertaining by personal observation in what condition they were, and how they were cared for. On the 3rd of March they went with the two eldest Princes to the Military Hospitals at Chatham, where a large number of the wounded from the Crimea had recently arrived. This visit led to the following letter to Lord Panmure by the Queen :—

'Buckingham Palace, 5th March, 1855.

'The Queen is very anxious to bring before Lord Panmure the subject which she mentioned to him the other night, viz. hospitals for our sick and wounded soldiers. These are absolutely necessary, and *now* is the moment to have them built, for no doubt there would be no difficulty in obtaining the money requisite for the purpose, so strong is the feeling now existing in the public mind for improvement of all kinds connected with the army, and the well-being and comfort of the soldier.

'Nothing can exceed the attention paid to these poor men in the barracks at Chatham, or rather Fort Pitt and Brompton, and they are in that respect very comfortable—but the buildings are bad—the wards more like prisons than hospitals, with the windows so high that no one can look out of them,—and the most of the wards are small, with hardly space to walk between the beds. There is no dining-room or hall, so that the poor men must have their dinners in the same room in which they sleep, and in which some may be dying, and at any rate suffering, while others are at their meals.

'The proposition to have hulks prepared for their reception will do very well at first, but it would not, the Queen thinks, do for any length of time. A hulk is a very gloomy place, and these poor men require their spirits to be cheered as much as to have their physical sufferings attended to. The Queen is particularly anxious on this subject, which is, she may truly say, constantly in her thoughts, as indeed is everything connected with her beloved troops, who have fought so bravely, and borne so heroically all their sufferings and privations. The Queen hopes before long to visit the hospitals at Portsmouth also, and to see in what state they are.'

Lord Panmure replied the same day, expressing his concurrence in Her Majesty's views as to the necessity of one or more general hospitals for the army, and stating that he would 'desire an immediate survey to be made for a proper site or sites, which shall combine all considerations for the health of the patients, and the facility of access to the invalids.' The idea mooted by Her Majesty was not allowed to drop, and it was subsequently carried out in the great Military Hospital at Netley.

Amid the difficulties, already sufficiently numerous, with which the Government had to deal in the management of the war, a sudden resolution of the Emperor Napoleon to repair in person to the Crimea, and to undertake the conduct of the campaign, added a fresh source of disquietude. This determination was announced in a letter which he addressed on the 26th of February to Lord Palmerston, in which it was put forward as 'the only way to bring to a rapid conclusion an expedition which otherwise must result in disaster to England as well as France.' The disadvantage of a divided command and the consequent want of unity of counsel were put forward as the reason which had decided the Emperor, without in any way presuming to place his military skill on a level with that of either Lord Raglan or General Canrobert, to secure by his personal presence the unity of view and action which was indispensable to success.

Sebastopol, the Emperor continued, could not, as matters stood, be taken except at an immense sacrifice of life. The army defending it, reinforced from time to time as it was from without, was in a position of immense advantage. The army from which it drew its reinforcements, on the contrary, was badly placed for meeting any vigorous attack on the part of the Allies. Let them succeed in that attack, and Sebastopol must fall into their hands upon comparatively easy terms. For this purpose two things were necessary:—first, a plan of action conceived in secret, and executed promptly,—next certain reinforcements in men, with an adequate transport service of horses and mules. He was prepared to find the additional men, if England on her part would find the vessels to carry what was wanted in the way of horses and mules to the Crimea. Leaving a sufficient force at Sebastopol for the purposes of the siege, he expected to be able to take into the field 62,000 French, and the 15,000 Piedmontese, who under a Convention concluded in the previous January with the King of Sardinia, were then upon their way to support the Allies in the Crimea.[12] 'With these forces at our disposal, all the chances will be on our side, for the Russians have only 30,000 men at Sebastopol, and 45,000 echeloned between it and Simferopol, and very probably they will not receive much in the way of reinforcements before the 1st of April.' 'Strike quickly, and Sebastopol will be ours before the 1st of May.'

'You will tell me, perhaps,' the letter continued, 'that I might entrust some general with this mission. Now, not only would such a general not have the same moral influence, but time would be wasted as it always has been in memorandums between Canrobert and Lord Raglan, between Lord Raglan and Omar Pasha. The propitious moment would be lost, the favourable chances let slip, and we should find ourselves with a besieging army unable to take the city, and with an active army not strong enough to beat the army opposed to it.'

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[12] On the 26th of January, 1855, the King of Sardinia acceded to the Convention between the French and English Governments of the 10th of April, 1854, and agreed to furnish and to maintain at full for the requirements of the war 15,000 men, under the command of a Sardinian general. By a separate article England and France agreed to guarantee the integrity of the King's dominions. England undertook the charges of transporting the troops to and from the Crimea, and under the Treaty a recommendation was to be made to Parliament to advance a million sterling to the King of Sardinia at 4 per cent.

It was obviously impossible for our Government to look with favour upon a proposal, to which the objections were so numerous and so serious, and which they had reason to know was disapproved by the Emperor's own advisers, military as well as civil. But to induce him to forego a project which he had worked out in detail, and to which he was strongly wedded, was a task of extreme delicacy. The one satisfactory feature in the Emperor's letter was the evidence it afforded of his firm attachment to the English alliance, and unwavering resolution to stand by us in seeing the war to its end;[13] and these, no less than his respect for the opinions of the Queen and her advisers, might be relied on to make him pause in his decision, when he found they could not go heartily along with him in it. Instead, therefore, of discussing it through the usual official channels, it was thought best, as the Emperor was to be at the camp at Boulogne early in March, that Lord Clarendon should visit him there, and go personally into the whole question. The Emperor was gratified by the implied courtesy thus shown to him; and the subject was talked over with the frankness and unreserve which he appears to have shown towards England throughout all the transactions of the war. The Prince preserved a record of what passed, as reported to the Queen and himself by Lord Clarendon, in the following interesting Memorandum:—

[13] What he thought of our soldiers a few words in his letter will serve to show: '*Les vingt mille Anglais campés devant Sébastopol comptent par leur bravoure comme cinquante mille hommes aux yeux de l'armée française.*'

'Buckingham Palace, 6th March, 1855.

'We saw Lord Clarendon yesterday afternoon, who had returned early that morning from Boulogne, and who reported his interviews with the Emperor.

'He saw Colonel Fleury upon his arrival (the Emperor's most confidential officer, and whose existence is entirely bound up with him).

'Fleury was anxious that Lord Clarendon should be acquainted with the fact (before he saw the Emperor), that the Emperor was entirely mistaken in the belief that his going to Sebastopol was popular with the army generally, or that he would even be well received by the troops in the Crimea. They adhered to him as Emperor, but did not like to be commanded by any one but a professional man, and they looked upon him as a civilian. The Emperor's plans might be ever so good, they would not carry with them the confidence of the army. Colonel Fleury had not formed this opinion hastily, but from an intimate knowledge of the feelings of officers of all ranks, acquired by daily intercourse with them, and Lord Clarendon afterwards found it amply corroborated by the language held by the Emperor's own aides-de-camp, and the officers who came in from the camp, in presence of his secretary, Mr. Ponsonby.

'Lord Clarendon was received with the greatest cordiality by the Emperor, who was evidently much pleased with his visit. He seemed very much struck with the news of the death of the Emperor of Russia, and speculated on its effects on the political juncture. He believed that it would incline both Austria and Prussia to a more vigorous policy, and that the new Emperor would find it more easy to make peace than his father. Lord Clarendon had to announce his dissent from both these views. The new Emperor would find it most difficult to control the feelings of the Russian party, and . . .

would not venture upon a policy which that party condemned. The King of Prussia, on the other hand, would be moved by some last dying words which the Emperor Nicholas may have been made to pronounce, and would then declare that the policy which had been hitherto his choice became now his sacred duty towards his deceased brother-in-law. (Lord Clarendon was amused and impressed at hearing from us that those words had already been spoken. . . .)

'The Emperor proceeded to explain his plan of campaign, and repeated the argument that he had used in his letter to Lord Palmerston, and wished to know whether the English Government could furnish the transport necessary. Lord Clarendon replied that every one concurred in the sagacity of the plan he suggested, but that it was a grave question whether the means for its execution existed.

'He then entered into a calculation of time, means of transport, troops, &c., which would be requisite, more in the style, as he said himself, of a contractor before a commercial company than of a Minister, showing that the means of transport in England were not inexhaustible; that we had now 102 large steamers employed in the Black Sea, which were hardly sufficient to satisfy all existing claims upon them; that a large ship like the *Himalaya*, the largest steamer in the world (3,000 tons), could carry only 320 horses, and that a trip from Sebastopol to Marseilles, with loading and unloading, coaling, &c., would take more than a month; that the utmost which could be accomplished was to carry out 10,000 men, additional French troops, besides the Sardinian army, in from six to eight weeks from the time of the order being given. What would be the Emperor's position if he went now to the Crimea? Probably condemned to inactivity for more than a month, and complaining of the slowness of the English Government, which was to carry his army for him. He thought the Emperor should not move till everything was ready, in order to give merely the *dernier coup de main*. "*C'est le mot*," said the Emperor; "*le dernier coup de main*." Lord Clarendon went on to show that, even if everything was ready, an absence of four months would be the least which would suffice to carry out even the most successful campaign, for the Emperor could not go away in the midst of it; if it failed, he would have to remain till the day of judgment, and France should have poured out her last man to retrieve his defeat. The Emperor seemed much struck with all these considerations, which had very probably never been so frankly laid before him, and said he could not possibly be absent four months from France—that he must be at Paris by the beginning of May.

'Lord Clarendon then took an opportunity to state to the Emperor most fully what I had been so anxious that he should convey to him, viz. the danger threatening the Alliance from a want of consideration for the feelings of the British army. His taking the supreme command would certainly not be popular either in England or in the English camp, but would be agreed to as not an unnatural consequence of the Emperor's presence on the spot. But if it were intended that the English should act merely as the carriers, or, at the utmost, be considered as fit to go on rotting in the trenches, whilst the honour and glory of the new campaign should fall solely to the lot of the French, a feeling would be roused with which the alliance would not remain compatible for a day. The alliance rested on the reciprocal feeling of the usefulness of each party to the other, and whenever that belief was lost the alliance could not survive it. Lord Clarendon used the same example for the illustration of this truth which I had used to him, namely that of the Turks, who had been praised to the skies; in whose defence we had engaged in the war; whose assistance in the Crimea had been anxiously called for; but who, from the moment that 200 of them, placed in a most unfair and exposed situation in the redoubts before Balaclava, had fled, were treated, not only with the utmost contumely, but with downright barbarity and cruelty on the part of the English and French. It was rather an extreme case, but proved that all consideration vanished when the belief in usefulness was lost.

'This seemed to be an entirely new view to the Emperor. He protested that he hoped nobody thought him capable of entertaining such intentions towards the English army. Should he go, he intended to submit his plans to Lord Raglan, whose experience and knowledge would be of the greatest use to him . . . . and if Lord Raglan agreed in the soundness of the plan of campaign, which he did not doubt, he would leave it entirely to him to take in it what part he pleased—either to share in the operations which he contemplated in the field with the whole or part of his force—or to remain in command of the investing army, &c. He thought it of the highest importance, however, that wherever the field of glory lay, the two flags should be seen waving together.

'Lord Clarendon's remark had made so strong an impression upon him, that he repeated next morning his thanks to him for having drawn his attention to it, and begged him to tell the Queen that, should he go, the honour of the British flag would be his first consideration, even beyond that of his own. . . .

'The Emperor was very anxious that a plan of campaign for the Baltic should be agreed upon. This was of less importance to him, who would join his ships to ours in whatever might be done; but it was of the greatest importance to us, whose prestige as masters of the sea, he considered, had been terribly shaken by the nullity of our proceedings in the Baltic last year. Nobody dreaded us any more, and this was a misfortune over which he sincerely grieved.'

The object of Lord Clarendon's visit was fully achieved. His reasons had induced the Emperor to postpone for the moment his projected visit to the seat of war; and although the idea was not given up by himself until some time afterwards, its ultimate abandonment was felt to have been virtually secured.

CHAPTER LXII.

MEANWHILE the Emperor's desire to go to the Crimea, having become known in Paris, had created the greatest uneasiness there. All felt that his presence with the army could do no good; while, on the other hand, his absence from France would be full of peril to his government at home. To his English allies this was a matter of serious moment. He was himself the soul of the war party in France; and had any evil befallen his person or his dynasty, we should have probably found ourselves compelled to fight out single-handed the conflict in which we were engaged. The mere apprehension of mischief from his plan had served to make the French more indifferent than ever to a war which they had never heartily liked, and consequently more inclined to a peace on almost any terms. It was, therefore, not without satisfaction that our Government learned through Lord Cowley, about a fortnight after Lord Clarendon's visit to Boulogne, that the Emperor had requested him to inquire whether a visit from the Empress and himself immediately after Easter would be acceptable to the Queen. A fuller opportunity would then be given to urge the objections entertained here to the Crimean project. It was known that the Emperor's reason for suggesting a visit to England on so short a notice was that he was resolved not to postpone his departure for the East beyond the end of April. Still every day's delay increased the chances of his being led to reconsider his decision.

During his visit to the Emperor at Boulogne the Prince Consort had, as we have seen (*ante,* p. 106), expressed Her Majesty's desire to see the Emperor and Empress in England. A little more time to make the needful arrangements for receiving the Imperial guests with befitting state would have been not unwelcome. Royal hosts, who have to represent the hospitality and the dignity of a nation, are naturally even more sensitive than the heads of humbler households about being taken at a disadvantage. But when the Emperor subsequently named the 16th of April for the day of his arrival, it required no great strain on the resources of the Royal establishment to prepare a reception worthy of the occasion. The splendid suite of apartments at Windsor Castle, in which the Rubens, the Zuccarelli, and the Vandyke rooms are included, was set apart for the Imperial guests; and there was the very irony of fate in the fact, that the Emperor's bedroom was the same which had been occupied during the present reign by the Emperor Nicholas and by King Louis Philippe. On the 13th the Queen was visited by Queen Marie Amélie. 'It made us both so sad,' is the entry in Her Majesty's Diary, 'to see her drive away in a plain coach with miserable post-horses, and to think that this was the Queen of the French, and that six years ago her husband was surrounded by the same pomp and grandeur which three days hence would surround his successor. The contrast was painful in the extreme.'

The Imperial visitors were expected to reach Dover early on the morning of the 16th, and the Prince had gone down there the previous evening to receive them. But in consequence of a dense fog, in which two steamers of the French squadron ran aground near the South Foreland, it was noon before the Imperial yacht, which had herself narrowly escaped a similar disaster, reached the Admiralty Pier. A fleet of English war steamers had been assembled off the port, and every preparation had been made to make the landing on the English shores as brilliant as possible. But the fleet was invisible, and the hosts of yachts and boats, which left the harbour to hail the approach of the Imperial squadron and were speedily lost in the mist, only added to the risk of casualties by crowding still farther the already over-crowded waterway. If something was lost in splendour of effect through the too national density of the atmosphere,[1] it was amply compensated by the heartiness of the welcome, which was all the more hearty in consequence of the apprehensions which had been felt—not, as it proved, without reason—for the safety of the Imperial visitors in making the passage of the Channel.

When they reached London, the spirit with which the British nation was determined to recognise the ally, who had hitherto stood so loyally by their side, was very strikingly manifested. The public had not been informed till the last moment by what route the Imperial cortége would proceed from the Bricklayers' Arms Station to Paddington. There was, therefore, but a scanty display of the flags and inscriptions customary on such occasions. But all London turned out to testify its welcome, and everywhere the utmost enthusiasm prevailed.

'By the humbler inhabitants of the Borough and Lambeth the Emperor was received with even greater cordiality than by the wealthier classes of the community at the West End, yet nowhere was there a lack of hearty good feeling and interest. The windows, the pavements, the balconies, the housetops, and every spot, in short, whence a commanding view could be obtained of the procession, were all densely crowded. . . . The scene presented by the clubs in Pall Mall was particularly animated, and among those who gazed upon his progress from the well-known haunts of former days, His Majesty no doubt distinguished many old familiar faces. . . . In passing King Street, the Emperor was observed to draw the attention of the Empress to the house which he had occupied in former days; and in him at least the sight of this house under such altered circumstances must have raised some strange emotions. All along Piccadilly the same display of popular feeling greeted them, and so they passed through Hyde Park to the Paddington station, receiving at every stage of their progress the warmest manifestations of respect and welcome.'—(*The Times*, 17th April, 1855.)

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[1] *The Times*' chronicler of the day reports thus: 'Prince Albert, who seems to take a peculiar pleasure in examining such works, inspected the (Admiralty) Pier at an early hour in the morning, and rather astonished the engineer and contractors by his familiarity with the details.' There were probably no great public works in progress where the same thing would not have happened.

What, meanwhile, was the state of things at Windsor, which had arrayed itself in all the splendour of flags and triumphal arches for the occasion? This will best be told by a few extracts from Her Majesty's Diary:—

'News arrived that the Emperor had reached London at ten minutes to five. I hurried to be ready . . . . and went over to the other side of the Castle, where we waited in one of the tapestry rooms near the guard-room. It seemed very long. At length, at a quarter to seven, we heard that the train had left Paddington. The expectation and agitation grew more intense. The evening was fine and bright. At length the crowd of anxious spectators lining the road seemed to move, then came a groom, then we heard a gun, and we moved towards the staircase. Another groom came. Then we saw the *avant-garde* of the escort; then the cheers of the crowd burst forth. The outriders appeared, the doors opened, I stepped out, the children and Princes close behind me; the band struck up, "*Partant pour la Syrie*," the trumpets sounded, and the open carriage, with the Emperor and Empress, Albert sitting opposite to them, drove up and they got out.

'I cannot say what indescribable emotions filled me—how much all seemed like a wonderful dream. These great meetings of sovereigns, surrounded by very exciting accompaniments, are always very agitating. I advanced and embraced the Emperor, who received two salutes on either cheek from me, having first kissed my hand. I next embraced the very gentle, graceful, and evidently very nervous Empress. We presented the Princes [the Duke of Cambridge and the Prince of Leiningen, the Queen's brother], and our children (Vicky with very alarmed eyes making very low curtsies); the Emperor embraced Bertie; and then we went upstairs, Albert leading the Empress, who, in the most engaging manner, refused to go first, but at length with graceful reluctance did so, the Emperor leading me, expressing his great gratification at being here and seeing me, and admiring Windsor.' When the Throne Room was reached, other presentations took place, and the Emperor and Empress were then conducted to their apartments by their Royal hosts.

At dinner the same evening the charm of the Emperor's manner seems to have quickly produced the effect of placing Her Majesty entirely at ease with him. He is, the Diary continues, 'so very quiet: his voice is low and soft, and "*il ne fait pas des phrases.*" The Emperor said that he first saw me eighteen years ago, when I went for the first time to prorogue Parliament, and that it made a very deep impression upon him, to see "*une jeune personne*" in that position. He also mentioned his having been a special constable on the 10th of April, 1848, and wondered whether I had known it. The war, and the news, which arrived just as he did,[2] of the opening of the fire from 400 guns, were a subject of conversation also. He is *very* anxious about the siege, and said, "*J'avoue que je crains un grand désastre, et c'est pour cela que je voudrais y aller,*" as he thought "*que nos généraux*" would take nothing upon themselves. I then observed upon the danger to which he might be exposed, how great the distance was, &c. He rejoined, that there were dangers everywhere, though he admitted the distance was very great.'

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[2] The besieging batteries opened fire on the 10th of April. The telegram to the Emperor announcing this fact, which awaited him at Dover, was given by him to the Prince, and has been preserved among his papers, with the following endorsement by himself: 'Telegraphic message to the Emperor of the French, which reached him on arriving at Dover, and which he gave to me.—A.'

Next day confirmed the Queen's impression, that the Emperor was 'very quiet and amiable, and easy to get on with. . . . Nothing can be more civil or amiable, or more well-bred than the Emperor's manner—so full of tact.' A long walk after breakfast, in the course of which the war and its prospects and our relations with Austria formed the chief topic of conversation,[3] afforded good opportunities for drawing conclusions on this subject. 'It was most interesting to hear him and Albert discuss all these matters. The Empress was as eager as himself, that he should go to the Crimea. . . . She takes the warmest interest in the war, and is all for the Emperor's going. She sees no greater danger for him there than elsewhere—in fact, than in Paris. . . . She said she was seldom alarmed for him, except when he went out quite alone of a morning. . . . She is full of courage and spirit, and yet so gentle, with such innocence and *enjouement*, that the *ensemble* is most charming. With all her great liveliness, she has the prettiest and most modest manner. She spoke much of Spain, and with sorrow of the misfortunes of that country. . . .' At luncheon the Emperor asked the Queen where Queen Marie Amélie was, 'and on my replying, in England, he said that last year he wrote to Uncle Leopold, that if the voyage back from Spain was too long for her, he hoped that she would come through France, "*et si votre Majesté veut bien le lui répéter, j'en serai bien content.*"

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[3] On the way up from Frogmore to the Castle, 'the Emperor admired the grass, and said (as all foreigners do) that you could never get that on the Continent.' He tried, however, to get it, in the Bois de Boulogne, and not altogether without success. It was one of our many English institutions which he would fain have seen naturalised in France.

'At four we all set off for the review [of the Household troops in Windsor Park], which was a most beautiful and exciting affair. . . . In the first carriage were the Empress (whom I always made get in and walk first), I, Bertie, Vicky, and dear little Arthur. Albert, the Emperor, George [Duke of Cambridge], and all the military gentlemen were on horseback. The crowd, in the Long Walk, of people on foot and on horseback was immense, and the excitement and cheering beyond description.[4] They squeezed round the Emperor, when we came to the gates, and rode across the grass to where the review was to be, in such a way that I grew very nervous, as he rode on a very fiery beautiful chestnut, called Phillips, and was so exposed. He rides extremely well, and looks well on horseback, as he sits high. He rode down the line with Albert and George, we following. After that we were stationed to see the troops pass by, slow and quick time—the Blues, 2nd Life Guards, Carabineers, and a troop of Horse Artillery,—Lord Cardigan commanding on the chestnut horse he rode at Balaclava, and in a great state of excitement. They afterwards manœuvred, and the artillery was seen to great advantage. The Emperor (who rode up several times to our carriage) and the Princes rode about and charged with the cavalry, &c. The whole concluded, as it began, with the Royal salute. We then returned as we came, and the enthusiasm, the excitement of the crowd, were quite indescribable. I never remember any excitement like it. It was at moments almost alarming; and there were numbers of terrified ladies standing on the road, clasping one another for fear of being ridden over. . . . The whole was again quite a triumph.'

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[4] 'The attendance of spectators was enormous, and their eagerness to catch a glimpse of the Emperor and Empress completely frustrated the attempts of the detachment of the 94th Regiment to keep the ground.'—*The Times*, 18th of April.

The Conferences at Vienna, which began on the 15th of March, were by this time drawing to a close, with little prospect of a satisfactory conclusion. It had early become apparent that Russia would assent to no practical plan for 'putting an end to her preponderance in the Black Sea,' which formed the third of the Four Points (see note *ante*, p. 162). So early as the 20th of March Prince Gortschakoff, the Russian Plenipotentiary at Vienna, had told Lord John Russell, that 'Russia would not consent to limit the number of her ships—if she did so, she forfeited honour—she would be no more Russia. They did not want Turkey, they would be glad to maintain the Sultan; but they knew it was impossible: he must perish; they were resolved not to let any other Power have Constantinople, they must not have that door to their dominions in the Black Sea shut against them.'[5] There was small hope of agreement here; still less, when on being formally invited by the other Powers to propose terms to carry out the limitation of her preponderance in the Black Sea, which she had admitted as one of the conditions of peace, Russia declined to do so. No weight could be attached to the profession with which Prince Gortschakoff accompanied this refusal, that Russia was prepared to examine any measures which might be proposed to her not inconsistent with her honour; as only one result could be anticipated, after the express declaration which her plenipotentiaries had made, that any restriction upon her naval force in the Black Sea was derogatory to the sovereign rights of the Emperor their master, and, (which was not easy to understand,) dangerous to the independence of the Ottoman Empire.[6]

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[5] Lord John Russell, in a private Despatch to Lord Clarendon, 20th March, 1855.

The Conferences had reached this stage, and it was expected that they would have now been broken off, when tidings reached England by telegram on the 17th of April of a proposal, which was supposed to have emanated from Austria, to meet the difficulty by limiting the Russian force in the Black Sea to the number of ships maintained before the war, under pain of war from the Allies. The objections to this proposition will be adverted to at a later stage. These struck the Prince from the first as insuperable, and the short entry in his Diary is,—'News from Vienna bad. Austria submits an absurd ultimatum.' At dinner the same day, Her Majesty's Diary records:—'The Emperor gave me a telegraphic despatch to read, which had come from Vienna, in which Austria *consentirait à faire la guerre* unless the Russian fleet were to remain the same as before the war (incredible and impossible!), added to some other propositions, which were worth consideration. The Emperor, while condemning the absurd notion of "*le chiffre de la flotte*" remaining the same, considered that this was "*un pas en avant*," Austria having spoken of going to war. I spoke to him of certain flattering letters from Count Nesselrode to Baron Seebach, which he had communicated to us a week or ten days ago, and observed on the desire and hope there had been and still was on the Continent, that our alliance could be broken. He said that the Russians at Paris had tried, and with some success, to make their party in France, and a good many other people also, believe that the Eastern Question "*ne regardait que l'Angleterre, et que cela ne regardait pas la France. C'était bien habile d'eux, et une grande difficulté pour moi.*"'

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[6] In a letter dated 26th of March, 1855, by Count Nesselrode to his son-in-law, Baron Seebach, the Saxon Minister at the Court of the Tuileries, which was written really *à l'adresse* of the Emperor of the French, and of which a copy was at once forwarded by him to the English Government, Count Nesselrode says, speaking of his master, '*L'empereur, quelles que soient ses dispositions pacifiques, n'acceptera jamais des conditions semblables, et la nation se soumettra à tous les sacrifices plutôt que de les subir.*' This was one of two letters, which will be found referred to in a passage of the Queen's Diary to be presently quoted in the text, in which the most flattering language towards France and the Emperor was used. '*Entre la France et la Russie il y a guerre sans hostilité.*' '*La paix se fera quand il* (the Emperor of the French) *la voudra. A mes yeux la situation se résume dans cette vérité.*' These are but a sample of the somewhat too palpable flattery of the Emperor's self-esteem —with what object it was not hard to divine,—which coloured these letters throughout.

A ball in the Waterloo Room wound up the evening. The Queen danced a quadrille with the Emperor, 'who dances with great dignity and spirit. . . . How strange,' Her Majesty adds, 'to think that I, the granddaughter of George III., should dance with the Emperor Napoleon, nephew of England's great enemy, now my nearest and most intimate ally, in the *Waterloo Room*, and this ally only six years ago living in this country, an exile, poor and unthought of!' Strange indeed! and none could have been so deeply impressed by the contrast as the Emperor himself, when he looked round at the portraits, with which the room is panelled, of the great statesmen and soldiers, the struggle and glory of whose lives it had been to hold his famous ancestor in check. 'We went to supper,' the Diary continues, 'the Emperor leading me, and Albert the Empress. Her manner is the most perfect thing I have ever seen—so gentle and graceful, and kind, the courtesy so charming, and so modest and retiring withal.'

Next morning at breakfast the Emperor received a telegram announcing the death of M. Ducos, his Minister of Marine, and in a walk with the Queen he remarked how extraordinary it was that he should have to name his successor, Admiral Hamelin, from Windsor. At eleven a Council of War met in the Emperor's apartments, at which the Prince, Lords Palmerston, Panmure, Hardinge, and Cowley, Sir Charles

Wood, Sir John Burgoyne, Count Walewski, and Marshal Vaillant were present. The task of drawing up a protocol of this conference seems by general consent to have been devolved upon the Prince, and it now lies before us in his own hand, with a few pencil marks of approval upon it by Marshal Vaillant. During the discussion, it appears by the Prince's statement, 'the necessity of making a vigorous diversion was strongly insisted upon by the Emperor, who had thought much upon the subject, and still combines with the plan the wish to carry it out himself. All present declared themselves unanimously against the Emperor's scheme of going himself to the Crimea, but without obtaining from him the admission that he was shaken in his resolution to do so.' After many hours the meeting broke up without coming to any definite conclusion.

'In a subsequent walk I took with the Emperor,' says the Prince's Memorandum, 'I expressed my deep regret at the insufficiency of the decisions come to in the morning, which after all left everything vague, afforded the commanders no precise data to go upon and adhere to, and left out the consideration of who was to command, and how the corps were to be composed, on which success would absolutely depend. I lamented that this, *perhaps last*, opportunity of coming to a thorough agreement between the Governments should be lost. The Emperor agreed fully in this, and explained to me further his plan of operations, which he hoped to execute himself.' This conversation led to the Prince striking out a definite plan of operations, different from any of those which had been suggested, which he put in form in a Memorandum, and showed to the Emperor in the evening, who 'expressed his entire approbation of it.' The Memorandum was then sent to Lord Palmerston, and after being canvassed by him in conference with Lords Panmure and Hardinge, and Sir John Burgoyne, the latter was instructed to put upon paper the result of their united deliberations, previous to a further Council of War, which had been arranged for the 20th.

From Her Majesty's Diary we extract some homely incidents in connection with the Council of the 18th. It had met at eleven. Two o'clock, the hour of luncheon, arrived, and found it still sitting, although informed that the Queen and Empress were waiting. 'After waiting a little while, the Empress went and told Lord Cowley how late it was.' There was to be a Chapter of the Order of the Garter at four, and important preparations of the royal *toilettes,* with a view to this august ceremonial, were indispensable. Still no one appeared. 'After a little while the Empress advised *me* to go to them—"*Je n'ose entrer, mais votre Majesté le peut; cela vous regarde.*" So I went through the Emperor's room (the council-room adjoined his bedroom), and knocked, and at last stepped in, and asked what we should do. The Emperor and Albert got up, and said they would come. However, they did not;' so after a little further waiting the Queen and Empress, with their ladies, had to lunch alone.

At four o'clock the Emperor was invested by the Queen with the Order of the Garter in the Throne Room. After the ceremony, 'as we were going along to the Emperor's apartments, he said, "*Je remercie bien votre Majesté. C'est un lien de plus; j'ai prêté serment de fidélité à votre Majesté, et je le garderai soigneusement.*" He added a little later, "*C'est un grand événement pour moi, et j'espère pouvoir prouver ma reconnaissance à votre Majesté et à son pays.*" These words are valuable from a man like him, who is not profuse in phrases, and who is very steady of purpose.' At dinner, among other topics, that of the French refugees in London came up. 'He said that when assassination was loudly and openly advocated, they should not enjoy hospitality. . . . We talked of the various attempts on myself, which he thought were too atrocious as against a woman. As for himself, he said he had the same opinion as his uncle, which was, that when there was a conspiracy that was known, and you could take your precautions, there was no danger; but that, when a fanatic chose to attack you, and to sacrifice his own life, you could do little or nothing to prevent it.'[7]

'We talked of the Revolution in 1848, and the horrors in June. He said he had met George [Duke of Cambridge] driving, and that George had said half-jokingly, "*Est-ce qu'on se bat pour vous à Paris?*" He answered, "There was no question of him, *et cependant déjà on se battait pour moi alors!*" Speaking of the want of liberty attaching to our position, he said the Empress felt this greatly, and called the Tuileries *une belle prison.* He himself shared the feeling strongly: "*J'ai pleuré de chaudes larmes en quittant l'Angleterre.*"

'After dinner,' the same record continues, 'I had some conversation with Maréchal Vaillant.[8] He is very much against the Emperor's going to the Crimea, and hoped I had spoken to him. I said, "*J'ai osé faire quelques observations.*" "*Mon Dieu, oser!*" he replied. "*Quand on est ensemble, il faut parler nettement;*" that the danger was very great; that the plan of the Emperor was a very good one; and that, if any other general executed it and failed, it would not signify; but the Emperor, the sovereign, that was a risk too serious to be run; that even for us, though it could not injure us in the way it might injure France, an *échec* would be very serious: "*vous êtes dans le même bateau;*" and, lastly, he thought there was great danger to France in the Emperor's absence. He hoped, however, that the Council had had some effect on him. "*Le Prince votre époux a été bien net,*" and had always brought people back to the point when they digressed. The Emperor told me, if it had not been for Albert, nothing would have been done.'

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[7] On the 29th of April, a few days after his return to Paris, while riding in the Champs Elysées, he was shot at by an Italian, Giacomo Pianori. The assassin, who was close to the Emperor, fired twice, but missed. Revenge for the French occupation of Rome was said to be Pianori's motive. The Emperor showed no signs of disquietude, and rode on at a foot's pace to the Empress, who was driving in the *Bois de Boulogne.*

[8] 'Maréchal Vaillant, Ministre de la Guerre. Tall and very large, quite in the style of Lablache, with small, fine features—a charming, amusing, clever, and honest old man, who is an universal favourite.'—*Queen's Diary.*

An orchestral concert closed the evening. In concluding her record of the day, the Queen says of the Emperor, 'His manners are particularly good, easy, quiet, and dignified—as if he had been born a king's son, and brought up for the place.'

April 19.—The Emperor had received an Address from the Corporation of London at Windsor Castle on the day after his arrival. The Empress and himself were now to partake of their hospitality in the City itself. The day, like all the days of his visit, was bright and fine. When left alone with the Queen and Prince after breakfast, the Emperor said, '"*Je vais maintenant, si votre Majesté le permet, lui lire ma réponse à l'Adresse de la Cité,*" which he had already told me yesterday he would do, "*afin de savoir, si vous aviez quelques observations à faire.*" He then read it to us in French, and we could only assent to everything in it, as it is an admirable speech;[9] and as everything he says or writes is the result of mature reflection, and is always recurred to and remembered, it is of great importance. He then asked leave to read it in English (into which he had had it translated), requesting us to correct his pronunciation, which we did, though it required but little correction; and he also asked our advice about one or two expressions. He did all this very naturally and frankly.'

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[9] The speech was received throughout the country with general approval; such passages as the following could not fail to tell, for they echoed the hearty wish of the kingdom, that France should bury all remembrance of past conflicts in a friendship based on mutual regard and the interlacing of reciprocal interests. 'Flattering as are your praises, I accept them, because they are addressed much more to France than to myself; they are addressed to a nation, whose interests are to-day everywhere identical with your own; they are addressed to an army and navy united to yours by an heroic companionship in danger and in glory; they are addressed to the policy of the two Governments, which is based on truth, on moderation, and on justice. For myself, I have retained on the throne the same sentiments of sympathy and

At eleven o'clock the Queen and Prince left Windsor Castle, with their Imperial guests, for London. 'I cannot say why,' again to quote Her Majesty's Diary, 'but their departure made me melancholy. . . . Passing through the rooms, the hall, and down the staircase, with all its State guards, and the fine old yeomen; the very melancholy tune (which "*Partant pour la Syrie*" is); the feeling that all, about which there had been so much excitement, trouble, anxiety, and expectation, was past; the doubtfulness of the future—all made me, I know not why, quite "*wehmüthig;*" and I hear that the Empress was equally sad at going away from Windsor.'[10] Speaking of the Empress, the Queen remarks the same day, 'Altogether I am delighted to see how much Albert likes and admires her, as it is so seldom I see him do so with any woman.'

From Buckingham Palace the Emperor and Empress proceeded alone in full state to Guildhall. The line of the procession was thronged with eager multitudes. 'While we were at luncheon,' the Queen writes, 'we heard that they had

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esteem for the English people, that I professed as an exile, while I enjoyed here the hospitality of your Queen; and if I have acted in accordance with my convictions, it is that the interest of the nation, which has chosen me, no less than that of universal civilisation, has made it a duty. Indeed, England and France are naturally united on all the great questions of politics and of human progress that agitate the world.'

[10] The sadness might almost be said to be prophetic of the changed circumstances under which first the Empress, and sometime later the Emperor, after he left Wilhelmshöhe, discrowned and bankrupt in fortune, were to see their Royal host, herself a widowed queen, again on the same spot.

reached the City in safety—a great relief, though I dreaded nothing. Albert was engaged the whole afternoon in writing a Memorandum on the Council of yesterday, and elucidating the intended plans.' The Emperor and Empress returned to the Palace about six, charmed with the way they had been everywhere received. The Corporation had spared no pains to make their reception memorable;[11] and the Emperor's knowledge of the English enabled him to appreciate the cordiality shown by the crowds, that waited in the streets to greet their return, as they had greeted their going.

In the evening a state visit was paid to Her Majesty's Theatre. The opera was 'Fidelio.' 'Never,' the Queen writes, 'did I see such enormous crowds at night, all in the highest good humour. We literally drove through a sea of human beings, cheering and pressing near the carriage. The streets were beautifully illuminated. There were many devices of N.E. V.A., which, the Emperor said, oddly enough made "Neva!" This seemed to have impressed him, for he said that he had observed it before at Boulogne.' 'On entering the theatre,' here we quote from the *Morning Post*, 'the Queen, taking the Emperor by the hand, led him forward, and bowing to the people with a grace and frankness beyond expression, presented to them her Imperial guest, whilst Prince Albert led forward the beautiful Eugénie.' The Queen had indeed taken care to indicate her own feeling, 'that the Emperor was the principal person on that occasion, and Her Majesty records that 'the applause for *him* was very marked. . . . The Emperor told me that after our marriage in 1840, when we went in state to Covent Garden, he had with great difficulty obtained a box, and afterwards they made him pay 40*l*. for it, "*que je trouvais pourtant*

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[11] The sherry served at the Imperial table during the *déjeuner* was part of a butt supplied to the Emperor Napoleon I. at the enormous price of 600*l*. per butt. So, at least, the chroniclers of the day reported.

beaucoup!" On this night I hear one person gave 100*l.* for a box.' On his return to the Palace, the Emperor found fresh news of the progress of the bombardment awaiting him from Sebastopol, 'which, he hoped, sounded favourable; but Albert was doubtful, and the Emperor said, "*J'ai bien peur que le Prince n'ait raison.*"' The Prince was right; for the bombardment failed to silence the Russian batteries, which were replaced as fast as they were disabled.[12]

The next day (20th April) was devoted to a visit to the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. It had been opened the previous year, and the interest and curiosity created by the novelty of the structure, the beauty of its site, and the variety and richness of its contents, were still fresh. The Emperor was at this time much occupied with the preparations for the first of the great Paris International Exhibitions. This remarkable building might therefore be assumed to have a special interest for him; and it was besides not unfitly selected for a visit, as showing how private enterprise in England had accomplished, on a scale of more than Imperial splendour, what in any other country could only have been produced by Imperial means.

'We discovered,' again to quote from Her Majesty's Diary, 'that this was his birthday—his forty-seventh—and though not fêted, or taken notice of publicly, we felt we could not do otherwise than take private notice of it. Consequently, when we went along the corridor to meet him, I wished him joy. He seemed for a moment not to know to what I alluded, then smiled, and kissed my hand, and thanked me, and I gave him a pencil-case. . . . The Emperor was also very much pleased at (Prince) Arthur's giving him two violets—the flower of the Bonapartes.'

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[12] On the 17th of April, in a private Despatch to Lord Panmure, Lord Raglan wrote: 'I believe there was never such a siege as this before. The resources of Russia are endless.'

The day was magnificent. Immense crowds lined the roads, and the Queen notes the frequency of the cries of '*Vive l'Empereur*' (sometimes in the cockney form, 'Vive le Hemperor') and '*Vive l'Impératrice*,' which saluted them as they passed along. No strangers were admitted to the Palace until after the Royal party had completed their inspection of its contents. This over, they stepped out upon the balcony to look at the gardens, and were struck with admiration, as the splendid panorama of field and woodland, intermingled with villages and church spires—that landscape so truly English in all its features—stretching away in the clear air for about twenty miles, burst upon their view. Straightway from the terrace below, where upwards of twenty thousand people were assembled, rose cheer after cheer, 'with a volume and fervour,' says *The Times*, 'which were quite overwhelming. The august personages, who were the objects of this demonstration, seemed greatly moved. Even the Emperor, impassive as he is in manner, was evidently excited, and the animated features of the Empress were lit up with an expression of astonishment and gratification.'

On returning to the Palace after luncheon the Royal visitors found it filled with people, who lined the avenue of the nave, and cheered them enthusiastically as they passed along towards the balcony, from which they were to see the fountains play, the upper series of which had just been completed and were now put in motion for the first time. 'Nothing,' the Queen writes, 'could have succeeded better. Still I own I felt anxious, as we passed along through the multitude of people, who, after all, were very close to us. I felt, as I walked on the Emperor's arm, that I was possibly a protection for him. All thoughts of nervousness for myself were past. I thought only of him; and so it is, Albert says, when one forgets oneself, one loses this great and foolish nervousness.'

At six o'clock the same evening a Council was held to settle the plan of future operations in the Crimea. Sir John Burgoyne had embodied his views in a Memorandum, and Lord Palmerston, in transmitting it to the Prince, had himself gone into the question at great length. The various views thus represented were discussed in detail, and again the Prince was charged with the duty of reducing the results to writing. 'We agreed,' he mentions in a Memorandum next day, 'that it was unnecessary and loss of time to discuss further particular modes of operation, for which there might be as many plans as heads, and none worth much, if made at a distance from the scene of action; that the chief point to arrive at was the organisation of the armies which were to operate, "*de se décider sur la valeur de la pièce, avant de vouloir jouer la partie, et de rendre nos capitaux fluides.*" . . . I then drew up a kind of scheme of agreement in seven heads, . . . to be signed on the part of both contracting parties.' It was so signed next day by Lord Panmure and Marshal Vaillant. 'The Emperor,' adds the Prince, 'has throughout acted with thorough good faith and good temper.'

The presence of the Queen at this Council was of course indispensable. Besides the Emperor and the Prince, Marshal Vaillant, Lords Palmerston, Clarendon, and Panmure were also present. The occasion and the men were alike remarkable. 'It was,' says the Royal Diary, 'one of the most interesting scenes I was ever present at. I would not have missed it for the world.'

Next day (21st April) was the day of departure. In the long and confidential interviews which had taken place between them, hosts and guests had been drawn so closely together, that the parting was that of friends, and therefore not unmixed with pain. The Emperor's last act was to inscribe his name in Her Majesty's Album. As he returned it to her, he said, '*J'ai tâché d'écrire ce que je sens.*' The words were: '*Je porte à votre Majesté les sentiments qu'on éprouve pour une reine et pour une sœur, dévouement respectueux, tendre amitié.*—NAPOLÉON.'

'As we were going along to the door, the Emperor said, how much he had felt our kindness—what a *bon souvenir* they would carry back, &c. "*N'est-ce pas, vous viendrez à Paris cet été, si vous pouvez?*" I replied: "Certainly, provided my public duties did not prevent me," which he understood. He said: "*Je crois, que d'avoir passé mon jour de naissance avec votre Majesté me portera bonheur, et le petit crayon que vous m'avez donné.*"'

Amid warm words of mutual regret, not wholly unmingled with tears, farewell was said. 'Away they drove,' to quote once more the vivid record to which we already owe so much, 'the band playing "*Partant pour la Syrie*" (which we had heard fourteen times on Thursday), and we ran up to see them from the very saloon in which we had just been together. The Emperor and Empress saw us at the window, turned round, got up, and bowed (Albert and George in the carriage with them). We watched them with the glittering escort till they could be seen no more, and then returned to our rooms.

'Thus has this visit, this great event, passed like everything else in this world. It is a dream, a brilliant, successful, pleasant dream, the recollection of which is firmly fixed in my mind. On all it has left a pleasant, satisfactory impression. It went off so well—not a hitch or *contretemps*—fine weather, everything smiling; the nation enthusiastic, and happy in the firm and intimate alliance and union of two great countries, whose enmity would be fatal. We have war now certainly, but war which does not threaten our shores, our homes, and internal prosperity, which war with France ever must do. . . . I am glad to have known this extraordinary man, whom it is certainly impossible not to like when you live with him, and not even to a considerable extent to admire. . . . I believe him to be capable of kindness, affection, friendship, and gratitude. I feel confidence in him as regards the future. I think he is frank, means well towards us, and as Stockmar (with whom I afterwards talked) says, "that we have ensured his sincerity and good faith towards us for the rest of his life." He (Stockmar) is delighted at the visit and our behaviour.[13]

'Albert returned at five. . . . He felt just as I did—much pleased with everything, liking the Emperor and Empress (the latter particularly), and being very much interested in them. . . .

'The Emperor wrote in Bertie's Autograph Book the following very pretty lines, which had been originally written for himself:—

'Jüngling mit der reinen Seele,
Mit der Unschuld freiem Gefühle,
Prüf und wähle,
Aber Lob sei nie dein Ziel!
Ob Dir Beifall jauchzt die Menge,
Ob sie lästert, wanke nicht.

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[13] In a Memorandum addressed to the Queen (dated 22nd April) by Baron Stockmar, who politically bore the Emperor no goodwill, the following passage occurs: 'Whatever his sins against morality have been till now, the reception he has met with in this country will, for his whole life, prevent him from sinning against England. The force of the sincerity, gentle kindness, and cordiality, with which he and his lady were treated whilst under the Queen's roof, can hardly have failed to make a deep and lasting impression on his mind. Acute as he is, he will compare the singleness and honesty of purpose he found here with what he experienced in this respect formerly and elsewhere, and become convinced that his greatest political advantage will be derived from being steady and true in his alliance with England.' The Baron expects, therefore, 'that the personal honesty of the Emperor to this country has been secured by this visit, and that the success of it is chiefly owing to the Queen and the Prince, whose conduct on the occasion has been perfection.'

Trüglich oft sind Preisgesänge,
Doch der Wahrheit Pfad ist enge,
Zwischen Klüften geht die Pflicht.[14]

'I am sure this is what he feels himself, and believes himself to have done, and to be doing.'

The immediate effect of the cordial reception given to the Emperor in this country was to increase his popularity at home. This was perceptible in the warmth with which he was greeted both in Boulogne and Paris on his way back from England. But, on his return, he found the difficulties of the political situation so gravely increased by the failure of the negotiations at Vienna, while the impossibility of leaving a Government behind, which either the country or himself could trust, was so apparent, and the alarm created by the rumour of his intention to go to the Crimea so general, that he came, though with extreme reluctance, to the conclusion that it must be abandoned. This not unwelcome news was conveyed to the Queen in a letter which he addressed to Her Majesty on 25th of April, from which we translate the following passage:—

'Though I have been three days in Paris, I am still with Your Majesty in thought; and I feel it to be my first duty again to assure you, how deep is the impression left upon my mind by the reception, so full of grace and affectionate kindness, vouchsafed to me by Your Majesty. Political interests first brought us into contact, but to-day, permitted as I have been to become personally known to Your Majesty, it is a living and respectful sympathy by which I am, and shall be henceforth, bound to Your Majesty. In truth, it is impossible to live for a few days as an inmate of your home without yielding to the charm inseparable from the spectacle of the grandeur and the happiness of the most united of families. Your Majesty has also touched me to the heart by the delicacy of the consideration shown to the Empress; for nothing pleases more, than to see the person one loves become the object of such flattering attentions.'

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[14] Youth, of soul unstain'd and pure,
  Innocent and fresh in feeling,
Choose and ponder, but be sure,
  World's praise never sways thy dealing!
Though the crowd with plaudits hail thee,
Though their calumnies assail thee,
Swerve not: but remember, youth,
  Minstrel praises oft betray,
Narrow is the path of Truth,
  Duty threads 'twixt chasms her way.

In the same letter the Emperor dwells with the emphasis of gratitude on the 'frank friendship' shown to him by the Prince, and on the high tone of mind and penetrating judgment, by contact with which he had learned so much.

Some days later (2nd of May), the Queen embodied in a Memorandum the results of the study of the Emperor's character, which the facilities of observation afforded by his visit had enabled her to make. From this we extract the following passages:—

'The great advantage to be derived for the permanent alliance of England and France, which is of such vital importance to both countries, from the Emperor's recent visit, I take to be this: that with his peculiar character and views, which are very personal, a kind, unaffected, and hearty reception by us personally in our own family will make a lasting impression on his mind. He will see that he can rely upon our friendship and honesty towards him and his country, so long as he remains faithful towards us. Naturally frank, he will see the advantage to be derived from continuing so; and if he reflects upon the downfall of the former dynasty, he will see that it arose chiefly from a breach of pledges and ambiguous conduct towards this country and its Sovereign, and will be sure, if I be not very much mistaken in his character, to avoid such a course.

'It must likewise not be overlooked that this kindly feeling towards us, and consequently towards England (the interests of which are inseparable from us), must be increased when it is remembered that we are almost the only people in his own position with whom he has been able to be on terms of intimacy, consequently almost the only ones to whom he could talk easily and unreservedly. . . . It is, therefore, natural to believe that he will not willingly separate from those who, like us, do not scruple to put him in possession of the real facts, and whose conduct is guided by justice and honesty. . . . I would go still further: I think that it is in our power to keep him in the right course. . . . We should never lose the opportunity of checking in the bud any attempt on the part of his agents or ministers to play us false, frankly informing him of the facts, and encouraging him to bring forward in an equally frank manner whatever he has to complain of. This is the course which we have hitherto pursued, and, as he is France in his own sole person, it becomes of the utmost importance to encourage by every means in our power that very open intercourse which I must say has existed between him and Lord Cowley for the last year and a half, and now, since our personal intercourse, with ourselves. . . .

'In a letter said to have been written by the Emperor to Mr. F. Campbell, the translator of M. Thiers's *History of the Consulate and Empire*, when returning the proof-sheets of his translation in 1847, he says: 'Let us hope the day may yet come when I shall carry out the intentions of my uncle, by uniting the policy and interests of England and France in an indissoluble alliance. That hope cheers and encourages me. It forbids my repining at the altered fortunes of my family.' If these be truly his words, he certainly has acted up to them since he has swayed with an iron hand the destinies of the French nation.'

CHAPTER LXIII.

While the Allied Sovereigns were settling, in concert with their constitutional advisers, the organisation of the forces to be employed in the prosecution of the war, the House of Commons was determining how England's share of the expense was to be provided. Mismanagement, always costly, is never more costly than in war,—not merely in men's lives, a nation's best wealth,—but through the necessity which it creates for retrieving omissions, and replacing losses in extreme haste and at any price. To continue Mr. Gladstone's plan of meeting the expenses of the war out of the annual revenue was now impossible. Although the estimated income for the year was close upon sixty-three millions and a half, the expenditure was calculated at nearly twenty-three millions in excess of this sum. On the 20th of April Sir George Cornewall Lewis, in introducing his Budget, explained that he proposed to meet the deficiency by raising sixteen millions on loan at three per cent., of which the whole had been taken at par by the Messrs. Rothschild and the Bank of England,—five millions by means of an additional twopence in the pound on the Income Tax,—and three millions by Exchequer Bills. Some of the details of his plan provoked discussion, but the resolutions for giving it effect were carried on the 23rd without difficulty. The nation was thoroughly in earnest, and, to achieve the objects of the war, it was prepared to find the necessary sinews without a murmur.

By this time it was generally understood that the negotiations at Vienna had proved abortive, and that the prospects of peace were, in fact, more remote than ever. The Russian Government having on the 21st of April definitely rejected the proposals for neutralising the Black Sea, or for limiting their own naval force there, the Plenipotentiaries of England and France declared their powers exhausted, and announced their intention to return home. Lord John Russell left Vienna on the 23rd of April, and was immediately followed by M. Drouyn de Lhuys. Austria, anxious to escape if possible from taking an active part in the war, which she now anticipated she would be called upon by the Western Powers to do under the Treaty concluded with them on the 2nd of December, 1854, devised a fresh series of terms for the consideration of Russia, to which reference has already been made in the preceding chapter. These terms in effect implied a surrender of all for which we had been contending, as they would have restored to Russia the predominance in the Black Sea, which we had again and again declared to be a standing menace to Turkey, and through her to the peace of Europe. The salient features of this new proposition, so far as they could be gathered by the Government from the information by telegraph which first reached them, were, that the Allies might each have two frigates in the Black Sea; that, if the Russians increased their fleet there beyond its present number, the Allies might each maintain there one-half the number of the Russian ships of war; that Russia should be asked by Austria not to increase her naval forces in the Black Sea beyond the number actually there in 1853, and, whether she accepted this engagement or not, that Austria would sign a treaty making any increase beyond that number a *casus belli.*

These terms were at once seen by our own Government, and also by the Emperor of the French, to be wholly unsatisfactory. They therefore learned with some dismay that they had met with the personal approval of both the French and English Plenipotentiaries. In his despatches Lord John Russell had indicated his own concurrence, and the Emperor informed our Ambassador, that they were pressed upon his approval by M. Drouyn de Lhuys with extreme urgency. In replying to a letter from Lord Clarendon informing Her Majesty of these facts, the Queen wrote:—

'Buckingham Palace, 25th April, 1855.

'The Queen has received Lord Clarendon's letter with extreme concern. How Lord John Russell and M. Drouyn can recommend such proposals to our acceptance is beyond her comprehension. The Prince has summed up the present position of the question in a few sentences, which the Queen encloses, and which she thinks might be communicated to the Cabinet and perhaps the Emperor.'

The Prince's Memorandum was as follows:—

'Buckingham Palace, 25th April, 1855.

'The point in the negotiations at which we have arrived, and upon which we have split, is the *Third* point of the conditions proposed by Austria and the belligerents, and accepted by Russia. Its formula is, "*de mettre fin à la prépondérance de la Russie dans la Mer Noire.*"

'This presupposes that there existed a "prépondérance" before the war which broke out in 1854.

'To limit the Russian naval power to that existing in 1853 would therefore be simply "*de perpétuer et légaliser la prépondérance de la Russie dans la Mer Noire,*" a proposal which can neither be made nor accepted as a development of the Third Point.

'The proposal of Austria to engage to make war when the Russian armaments should appear to have become *excessive* is of no kind of value to the belligerents, who do not wish *to establish a case for which to make war hereafter*, but to obtain a security upon which they can conclude peace now.'

In the views thus expressed, Lord Palmerston mentioned in writing next day to the Queen, the Cabinet concurred, holding that the Austrian proposal 'could not be more accurately described than in the concise terms' of the Prince's Memorandum, 'namely, that, instead of making to cease the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea, it would perpetuate and legalise that preponderance, and that, instead of establishing a secure and permanent peace, it would only establish a prospective case for war.' The bait, which had apparently captivated M. Drouyn de Lhuys, of securing the co-operation of Austria, if Russia were to increase the numbers of her present Black Sea fleet, was regarded by the Cabinet as purely illusory. Would Austria, who shrank from conflict with Russia now, when the Russian army was crippled by heavy losses, was widely scattered, and its efficiency strained to the utmost, and when England and France were in the field against the Czar, be more ready or more likely to move against Russia hereafter, when she had recruited and concentrated her strength, and when the Allied forces were back in their home stations, and reduced to the level of peace establishments? 'What reason, moreover, is there,' Lord Palmerston added, 'for supposing that Austria, who has recently declared that, though prepared for war, she will not make war for ten sail of the line more or less in the Russian Black Sea fleet, will some few years hence, when unprepared for war, draw the sword on account of the addition of one ship of war to that fleet? Such proposals are really a mockery.' And, indeed, they savoured more of the astuteness of Russian diplomacy than of the friendly suggestions of a nominal ally.

The more they were examined the more distasteful did they appear, and they were not made more palatable by the personal arguments either of M. Drouyn de Lhuys or of Lord John Russell on their return to their posts. After some slight hesitation, due to imperfect information as to the real scope of the proposal, the Emperor ended with being entirely at one with the English Cabinet, and on the 5th of May his final decision not to entertain it was communicated by Count Walewski to Lord Clarendon. M. Drouyn de Lhuys was too far committed to remain in office after this decision; and the next day Lord Clarendon was informed that Count Walewski was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was to be succeeded as Ambassador in London by M. Persigny. As Lord John Russell had taken the same view at Vienna as M. Drouyn de Lhuys, his first conclusion was that that statesman's resignation involved his own.

There seems little room for doubt that it would have been better had he acted upon his first impression. The fact of the identity of their opinions was sure, sooner or later, to become known, and it was neither for the advantage of the Government, nor of his own reputation, that he should retain a prominent place in their councils, when he had urged terms of peace upon their acceptance, which they, on the other hand, were agreed in thinking would be ignominious to England, and a triumph to Russia before all Europe. His resignation, with the explanations which it must have entailed, would no doubt have been embarrassing to the Ministry. But better this, than that the facts should have been dragged to light by their adversaries, as they subsequently were, with all the damaging commentaries to which the disclosure exposed both the Government and its Plenipotentiary.

That M. Drouyn de Lhuys should have fallen so readily into the Austrian proposals was not surprising. His master, indeed, was sincere in allying himself with Great Britain for the purposes which both countries professed, and of which M. Drouyn de Lhuys had himself been the eloquent exponent. But our Government had for some time divined, from much that came within their observation, that the French Minister had no cordial love for the English alliance; and would, indeed, have been better pleased to cement an alliance with Prussia, Austria, and Germany, which should keep England under control, than to see a permanent friendship established between this country and France. To break up the Continental alliance, was from his point of view of vital moment, and to detach Austria from Russia a step of the first importance. This, with the defeats which Russia had already sustained, would have satisfied the grudge M. Drouyn de Lhuys owed that country for the advantages she had gained in the question of the 'Holy places,' and for the refusal of the Czar to acknowledge the French Emperor as his brother, while it would have met his ideas of the extent of the French interest in the European question. If England suffered by having to conclude an unsatisfactory peace, so much the better in the view of one who thought her already too strong. But better still would have been the dissolution of the Continental league, which had for so long a series of years held France in check. If, therefore, M. Drouyn de Lhuys believed that Austria was prepared to take the field against Russia, if her new proposals for peace were rejected, his assent to them is intelligible. It does not, however, appear that a pledge to this effect was ever formally given. More probably Austria knew, that Russia would have accepted the conditions suggested, and in his eagerness to push his own favourite policy M. Drouyn de Lhuys allowed himself to entertain proposals, by which, in truth, it would not substantially have been advanced. For, if Russia had accepted Austria's terms, as she might well have done, that country would have been drawn more closely into alliance with her, at least for the time. Prussia, through her Sovereign, was already in Russia's hands.

It would seem that the policy of the English refusal to entertain the Austrian project was questioned even by friendly critics abroad. To remove misapprehensions in a quarter where he was anxious that none should exist, the Prince went fully into the subject in a letter (18th May) to the Prince of Prussia (the present Emperor of Germany), in which he dealt fully with the suggestion, which had been thrown out, that Russia might be held in check by the presence in the Black Sea of English and French naval forces sufficient to create an effectual counterpoise to the Russian fleet. From this letter we extract the more important passages:—

'The creation of war harbours and establishments in the Black Sea, is not such a simple and practicable task as it may look. Except Sebastopol, there is no *natural* harbour in all the Black Sea. They must therefore be constructed artificially, and this alone is an undertaking which cannot be carried out under from twenty to thirty years. Cherbourg was begun under Louis XIV., and is not complete to this hour, despite the most strenuous and unintermitted efforts of the different French Governments. Plymouth was begun in 1805 and only finished in 1842. I speak here only of the harbour, not of the dockyards, which are still in hand. Since 1845 we have been at work at Dover, Holyhead, and Portland, without much progress visible. If this be so in the centre of civilisation, and with all our national resources at hand, how should we stand in dealing with similar works in Asia Minor? After the harbours are built, great dockyards would be essential; Russia has for fifty years been hard at work preparing hers in Sebastopol (this, too, within her own territory); then the whole would have to be protected by extensive sea and land fortifications; and these again would create the necessity for a garrison of from five to ten thousand men, and when all is done, we should only have built a mousetrap for ourselves, for without the possession of the Dardanelles we might at any moment be cut off from everything we had constructed, and starved out. In the same way it would puzzle us to hold Malta without Gibraltar, island though it be.

'Well, you say, whoever wants to be secure must not shrink from making sacrifices. Most just; but we *have* made the sacrifices of the war—sacrifices which for us alone already amount to forty-seven millions sterling—sacrifices which, very naturally, Austria, Prussia, and Germany, have shrunk from making. The nation has willingly made these *temporary* sacrifices, but it has not paid that price in order to purchase *permanent* sacrifices. It expects, and justly, a peace in return, which will lay the foundations of lasting security and concord, not an armed truce, the maintenance of which is based upon the constant presence of all the antagonistic elements of strife.

'The reduction of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, which is indicated as the sacrifice on the other side, is no sacrifice at all, but an actual boon to the Russian State. But to a limitation of this kind we are told Russian honour can never assent! I should accept the argument as unanswerable if it were the Baltic fleet whose limitation was demanded, or a fleet organised for the protection of the Russian coasts and of Russian commerce: but the fleet here is one whose very existence can be regarded only as a means of aggression against the Porte: a fleet which has no enemy to repel from its commerce or its coasts; which cannot venture on the high seas, but is built solely for a land-locked sea; whose existence therefore is in no sense necessary for the welfare of Russia, although it menaces the destruction of the Porte. The only argument which Prince Gortschakoff could adduce for its being necessary was, that it was required to protect Constantinople against the ambitious designs of the Western Powers.

'Further, it is said that the demand for a limitation of the fleet is unjust, because Sebastopol has not yet been taken. To this I need only reply by recalling attention to the fact that what Russia formerly said was: Now we can enter upon negotiations for peace, for the Allies have their victories of Alma and Inkermann, we our brilliant defence of Sebastopol; if the city falls, our honour forbids us to think of peace!

'Let me put aside all diplomatic considerations, and deal with the question of peace upon the basis of the actual *status quo*, as mere soldiers would be justified in doing. We are now in possession of Eupatoria and Balaclava, the Black Sea and the Baltic. If we evacuate all these positions, what is to be our consideration for doing so? Permission to have a small number of ships in the Black Sea, which are to observe how Russia goes on restoring her naval power there, of which we have for the moment made an end. Is that an *equitable* proposal? The following illustration would fairly represent what is proposed. Two people spring upon a third and take from him a pistol, with which he threatens to assassinate their friend: after a long struggle the third man says: "Let me go!"—"On what condition?"—"That I get back my pistol, and that you also have pistols with which you may stand sentry over your friend."

'What fate this summer may bring us, the gods only know! We are in good heart, trusting in the goodness of our cause; but I still remain of opinion that so long as Austria and Prussia take no active part in the war, we shall not make any speedy peace; with their participation it would be made speedily, and on terms not too unfavourable to Russia, for then, instead of the preliminary condition, that Russia must be thoroughly beaten before she can give in, would have interposed the fact of the mere demonstration of the whole European contending Powers, to cope with which Russia cannot feel herself able, a fact which she may admit without dishonour.'

The Eastern Question being, as it was, one which concerned Europe generally, it was indeed not likely to be settled permanently except with the active concurrence of all the European Powers. Even if Russia were beaten to her knees, and driven to accept terms which she regarded as humiliating, what prospect was there that she would hold herself bound by these terms one hour after she thought she had recovered strength to reassert her claim to dominate Turkey, and again to dispute the right of Europe to interfere, diplomatically or otherwise, in whatever differences might arise between her neighbour and herself? All material guarantees against such a contingency were manifestly inadequate and could at best be only temporary. A general European concert could alone effect a permanent settlement. Neither Austria nor Prussia, it was obvious, would throw themselves into the present struggle. But might it not be possible to induce them to enter into an alliance, by which they should bind themselves to make the war of Russia on Turkey a general international object, and a *casus belli* for the alliance? Why should they not combine with the Western Powers in demanding from Russia that any existing or future questions between her and Turkey, or between Turkey and any of themselves, should not be decided by arms, but be dealt with diplomatically in concert with the other European Powers, and that Russia, in the deliberations on all such questions, should not pretend to more than one voice? Any action to the contrary should be considered as war to the alliance, and be dealt with as such. All previous treaties between Russia and the Porte having been annulled by the war, the pretensions of Russia to special rights in Turkey were at an end. The other States of Europe were not less solicitous than Russia for the establishment of good government and religious toleration in European Turkey. United, they could put irresistible pressure upon the Porte to compel the necessary reforms, or, if the Ottoman rule continued, after fair trial, to prove intolerable to the well-being and perilous to the tranquillity of Europe, such changes might be devised in the common interest, as would ensure the welfare of the conflicting races within the country, without the anarchy and widespread misery, which must ensue from any forcible and one-sided attempt to alter their relations to each other. Any other settlement, which left Turkey free to play the rival ambitions of one State against another, and at the same time left these States free to seek the aggrandisement of their own interests in the weakness and wickedness of Ottoman rule, could only be patchwork, and be followed by sanguinary and wasting struggles at some future day.

Such, we may fairly conclude, to have been some of the considerations which were canvassed between the Prince and Baron Stockmar, who had passed the winter in England, and was still there, in the 'high debates' which they held upon the great question of the hour. In a Memorandum submitted to the Cabinet, and which was before them in deliberating finally on the Austrian proposal, some of the Prince's views in this direction are developed in the following terms:—

'A difficulty existing in enforcing material guarantees, let us consider the value of diplomatic guarantees.

'There is only one kind of diplomatic guarantee that appears to me to be an equivalent for the material one given up with the principle of limitation, viz., that of a general European defensive league for Turkey as against Russia.

'Carrying this out, it should be agreed upon by Europe, in addition to a general guarantee of the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire, and to stipulations as to the steps to be taken in the event of threatening armaments on the part of Russia, that on no account are to be renewed any of the old treaties between Russia and Turkey, by her interpretation of which Russia has at all times been able to interfere in the internal affairs of Turkey and to obtain a plausible cause of quarrel; that every question between Turkey and another Power is to be brought for settlement before the European tribunal, and any attempt to enforce demands upon Turkey single-handed is to constitute a *casus belli* for the contracting parties.

'This agreement should not be entered into with Austria alone, who has proved to us that, the case arising, she would always hesitate to go to war with Russia as long as the position of Prussia and Germany remained undefined, but should include both these Powers, as well as, if possible, Sardinia and Sweden. This would place Europe permanently in a compact attitude for defence, and render it entirely impossible for Russia to make any threatening movement towards Turkey, had she even ever so many ships in the Black Sea. It would, moreover, place Russia, with regard to her influence over the different States of Europe, in the disadvantageous position, that each of them would feel conscious, that on a given emergency it was in duty bound to oppose her by force of arms—a consciousness which would place a moral bar to the kind of protectorate which Russia has hitherto exercised over the whole centre of Europe, and particularly over Germany.

'Can such a defensive coalition be obtained? *I think it may.*

'Austria, I am sure, can wish for nothing better; insuring her, as it would, against future Turkish complications, and guaranteeing to her, if they should arise, the preconcerted support of the whole of Germany and of the Western Powers.

'Prussia has already several times shown her willingness to buy off the necessity of a present decision by prospective promises. It ought clearly to be worth her while to join in making such a proposal, for the purpose of obtaining an immediate peace and security from impending complications without incurring any sacrifice or running any present danger.

'It may be objected that peace upon such terms would not satisfy the honour of our arms.

'If it does not, the cause must not be looked for in the nature of the peace itself, but in the fact that we have not taken Sebastopol. With respect to this it must, however, be said, that the expedition to the Crimea was undertaken, not for its conquest, but in order to bring Russia to terms of peace which would give security to Turkey; and that the Crimea was chosen by France and England, forsaken by the rest of Europe, as the only vulnerable point of attack.

'In making such a peace we should have succeeded in our object *for the present*, and imposed upon *the whole of Europe united* the task to defend *for the future* what, from an unfortunate complication of circumstances, has been left in this instance to the single exertions of the Western Powers.

'It may be doubted, at the same time, whether any success which the Allies might obtain in the Crimea or the Black Sea generally will inflict such losses on Russia as would make her willing to submit to conditions which she might consider humiliating; and other more important successes cannot reasonably be expected without a participation in the war of any of the Powers bordering upon Russia.

'To sum up, I think we ought to say: If Austria, Prussia, and Germany will give the diplomatic guarantee for the future which I have above detailed, we shall consider this an equivalent for the material guarantee sought for in the limitation of the Russian fleet, and pass on to the fourth point of the bases of negotiations for peace.

'ALBERT.

'Buckingham Palace, 3rd May.'

In the views thus expressed the Cabinet concurred, and a copy of the Memorandum was sent, with their approval, to the Emperor of the French. He thereupon decided to join with us in rejecting the Austrian proposals, a step immediately followed by the resignation of M. Drouyn de Lhuys.

On the 5th of May Stockmar left England. He was very much out of health, and depressed by the effects of a painful affection of the liver, from which he suffered through life. All partings were especially distasteful to him, and on the present occasion he gave no notice of his intention. His vacant rooms were the first intimation to his hosts that their valued guest was gone. Next day the Prince wrote to him as follows:—

'I will send after you only one word, of the dismay occasioned by your sudden disappearance. There was an outcry through all the house from great and small, young and old! "The Baron is gone!" Then, however, came variations upon it. "I wanted to say this and this to him." "He promised he would stay longer." "I went to his room, and found it empty." "I would have travelled with him." "He promised to carry a letter to my father." "*J'ai encore commencé un travail qu'il me demandait.*"

'You can divine who the persons were by what they exclaimed, without my naming them; but not the feelings of regret which overwhelmed all at having lost you from among us!

'I hope you have not suffered on your journey from the abominable weather. I have been seized with fresh cold in the head, and am overwhelmed with business—yourself, Brieglcb, Becker, and Grey, having all deserted me within two days, and left me here alone with Phipps, to wrestle with the deluge as best I may.

'I have completed my Memorandum upon the Peace question, and sent one copy to the Cabinet, and another (with the consent of the Cabinet) to the Emperor. Your ideas have been developed in it. I would I could have submitted it to yourself first! As a courier is going to Brussels, I must send you a line by him.

'Drouyn's resignation supposes a return to the policy from which he and Lord John departed. I fear it will involve the resignation of the latter, which will have the effect of involving us in fresh Ministerial difficulties. Walewski stepped into Drouyn's place, and to the inquiry whether Persigny would be acceptable to the Queen here, the answer has been given in the affirmative.

'The attacks upon the Army and the Administration here continue, *The Times à la tête du mouvement.*

'Sir Robert Inglis died two days ago. I lose in him a colleague in the Fine Arts Commission, and a steadfast friend, despite his extreme "sanctity."

'The Duke [of Coburg] arrives this evening, but will only remain a few days, because the King of Saxony has intimated his intention to visit him at Gotha. He will give us the latest news from Paris.

'The news from the Crimea are all favourable.

'Buckingham Palace, 8th May, 1855.'

A few days after this letter was written a violent attack upon the Army and the Administration was made in the

House of Lords by Lord Ellenborough, in moving an Address to the Queen expressive of absolute distrust in those to whom the conduct of the war was entrusted. A majority of 110 in favour of the Ministers in a House of 250 disposed conclusively of the motion. Lords Hardwicke and Derby, on the one side, and the Duke of Newcastle, Lords Granville and Lansdowne, on the other, took part in the debate, which was chiefly memorable as eliciting from Lord Lansdowne the first authentic statement which had up to this time been published in England, of the frightful expenditure of human life which the war had already caused to Russia. He said :

> 'The loss and destruction and misery inflicted on the Russians have been threefold that inflicted on the whole armies of the Allies. The noble earl has some idea, perhaps, of the extent to which that loss has gone ;—that, if our troops have suffered from want of clothing, of habitations, of the means of transport, the Russians have suffered ten times more ; but I should astonish your lordships by stating what the amount of that loss to the enemy has been. I have here a statement, made on the very highest authority, and from this it appears that a few days before the death of the Emperor Nicholas a return was made up, stating that 170,000 Russians had died, and according to a supplementary return, made up a few days later, 70,000 were added to the list, making a total loss of 240,000 men.'

'The loss of a single life in a popular tumult excites individual tenderness and pity. No tears are shed for nations.' So wrote Sir Philip Francis in a letter to Burke. It is a pitiful truth. And yet a thrill of horror went through the House at this startling announcement, and it awoke the profoundest feeling of sympathy throughout the kingdom for the brave men so ruthlessly sacrificed to one man's ambition. '*Heu, cadit in quemquam tantum scelus?*' was the thought which rose in many a mind.

A fellow feeling had quickened men's sensibilities at home to the terrible sacrifices of war, and the moral responsibilities of those who provoke it. The maimed and wasted frames of such of our picked troops as had been sent home invalided, told of these in a language more eloquent than words. From week to week men read of fresh detachments of invalids returning and being visited by the Queen and Prince. But more impressive than all was the scene when, on the 18th of May, the Queen presented the Crimean medals to the officers and soldiers who had been engaged in the battles of the Alma, Balaclava, and Inkermann. Long before the hour appointed for the ceremony, which took place on the Parade between the Horse Guards and St. James's Park, every spot was occupied from which it could be seen. Soon after ten o'clock the Queen and Prince arrived upon the ground, and took up their places upon a raised daïs.

> 'After the customary ceremony of marching past, the line formed three sides of a square, facing the daïs. The names of the officers, &c. entitled to the decoration were called over by the Deputy Adjutant-General, and each person passing in succession was presented with the medal. As each soldier came up, Lord Panmure handed to the Queen the medal to which he was entitled, and the soldier having saluted Her Majesty passed on to the rear, where they might be seen proudly exhibiting their medals to admiring groups both of friends and strangers'—(*Morning Chronicle*, May 19, 1855.)

So far back as the 22nd of March, the Queen had herself suggested to Lord Clarendon, that the medals should be given by her own hands, for she knew well how this would not merely enhance the value of the gift, but go to the very hearts of the brave men who were at this moment upholding their country's honour before a gallant and powerful foe. It was right that the people, in the person of their Sovereign, should thus testify their appreciation of those who had fought so well and borne so much. Let the following letter from Her Majesty to the King of the Belgians tell how thoroughly her own sympathies were moved, along with those of the crowds, who watched with dimmed eyes and beating hearts the spectacle, of which she was the central figure:—

'Buckingham Palace, 22nd May, 1855.

'. . . Ernest will have told you what a beautiful and touching sight and ceremony (the first of the kind ever witnessed in England) the distribution of the medals was. From the highest prince of the blood to the lowest private, all received the same distinction for the bravest conduct in the severest actions, and the rough hand of the brave and honest private soldier came for the first time in contact with that of their Sovereign and their Queen. Noble fellows! I own I feel as if they were my own children—my heart beats for them as for my nearest and dearest! They were so touched, so pleased,—many, I hear, cried; and they won't hear of giving up their medals to have their names engraved upon them, for fear that they should not receive the identical one put into their hands by me! Several came by in a sadly mutilated state. None created more interest or is more gallant than young Sir Thomas Troubridge, who had at Inkermann one leg and the foot of the other carried away by a round shot, and continued commanding his battery till the battle was over, refusing to be carried away, only desiring his shattered limbs to be raised, in order to prevent too great a hæmorrhage![1] He was dragged by in a bath chair, and when I gave him his medal, I told him I should make him one of my aides-de-camp for his very gallant conduct; to which he replied, "I am amply repaid for everything." One must revere and love such soldiers as those!'

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[1] When his request had been complied with, he continued to watch with the greatest anxiety the progress of the cannonade, and, each time the guns were loaded, gave the word 'Fire!' as composedly as if he had been untouched. When pressed to allow himself to be removed, so that his wounds might be attended to, he answered, 'No! I do not move until the battle's won.'—On the 19th of March the Prince had gone to see Sir Thomas Troubridge at Portsmouth.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Count Nesselrode had said in one of his recent despatches, speaking of the Russian army, 'Their noble devotion has been, of all the appliances of negotiation, the most conducive to success.'[1] The Allied Governments, on their part, saw no less decisively, that it was only through their armies that negotiation was now possible. While the Conferences were proceeding at Vienna, the Allied forces had not been idle. They had failed to make any impression by their fire on the defences of Sebastopol, but their trenches were drawing closer and closer to the city. They had repelled successfully more than one desperate sally. With the finer weather their hardships had diminished; sickness was abating; the men were in good heart, and on the English side, at least, were growing impatient for more decided action. Their eagerness was held in check by the irresolution of the French Commander-in-chief, General Canrobert, who, with all his fine qualities as a soldier, wanted the self-confidence and the wise boldness of initiation which go to the making of a general of the highest order. He felt his own defects, and asked to be relieved of his command. His request was complied with, and on the 19th of May Lord Raglan telegraphed to Lord Panmure that his coadjutor had been authorised by the Emperor to place his command in the hands of General Pélissier.

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[1] *'Leur noble dévouement a été, de tous les moyens de négotiation, le plus victorieux.'*

The change was welcomed as an assurance that the bolder counsels, which Lord Raglan had long urged in vain, would henceforth prevail in the French camp. Canrobert, whose heart and soul were in the enterprise, and who was devoted to his English comrades [2] in it, continued to give his valuable services at the seat of war as a General of Division. But the information which reached our Government as to the respective qualities of his successor and himself satisfied them that under General Pélissier the siege was more likely to advance, than if the control of the French forces had not passed into his hands. The difference between the two men, according to Marshal Vaillant, was this: 'Pélissier will lose 14,000 men for a great result at once, while Canrobert would lose the like number by driblets, without obtaining any advantage.' Canrobert's proceedings before Sebastopol had confirmed this view. He had hesitated to seize and to fortify the Mamelon Hill, while it was still free to him to do so,—a neglect which cost numberless lives, and delayed for months the progress of the siege. He left himself to be attacked, where vigour of assault would have secured important advantages with smaller loss of life, and from mere apprehension of weakening his forces suffered them to be wasted away in repelling sallies, which a bolder policy would have made impossible. General Pélissier was cast in a different mould. To strike boldly and thoroughly was his way. Speaking of his determination General Changarnier—himself a man by no means wanting in the quality—once said: 'If there was an *émeute*, I should not hesitate at burning a quarter of Paris. Pélissier would not flinch from burning the whole.'

The time had come for the Allies to strike at the foe elsewhere than at Sebastopol. To destroy the stores from which his supplies were drawn, was the most effective means of weakening the resistance there. With this view arrangements had some time before been organised for an expedition to Kertch and the Straits of Yenikale, which lead into the Sea of Azoff, there being every reason to believe that from this part of the Crimea large supplies were being sent by a circuitous route to Sebastopol. A former expedition with the same object had been recalled, just after it started, by a telegram from the Emperor of the French; but on the 21st of May it sailed again with a large body of troops, English, French, and Turkish, under the supervision of Sir George Brown. They disembarked in the neighbourhood of Kertch without resistance, and on advancing found that the Russians had retreated, having first blown up all their works along the coast, spiked all their guns, and, before evacuating Kertch, destroyed immense stores of provisions. Advancing into the Sea of Azoff with his squadron of steamers on the 25th of May, Captain Lyons[3] found that four Russian war-steamers, which had escaped from Kertch, had been run ashore and burnt to the water's edge at Berdiansk. Here many vessels and extensive corn stores were taken and destroyed. At Genitchi four days later the expedition burnt many corn stores and vessels laden with corn. All these objects were effected without loss of life and with scarcely a casualty.

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[2] 'Canrobert is a worthy fellow as can be, and much attached to the English.'—*Private Letter from General Simpson to Lord Panmure,* 21st July, 1855.

The heaviness of the blow thus inflicted upon the Russians was unquestionable, for the stores destroyed at Kertch and in the Sea of Azoff were alone computed to be equal to the rations of 100,000 men for four months. Moreover, it was now apparent that the available forces of the Russians were by no means so numerous as had been represented, otherwise they would never have allowed so formidable a blow to be struck without some show of resistance. This conclusion was confirmed by an intercepted letter from Prince Gortschakoff, from which it appeared that General Wrangel, who commanded the troops in the peninsula of Yenikale, and had repeatedly asked for reinforcements in anticipation of an attack by the Allied forces, had been told in reply that none could be sent. It was viewed by the English troops as a good omen that the successful descent upon Kertch was made on the Queen's birthday, the 24th of May. It had, indeed, struck the enemy in his weakest point—his supplies of food and the means of transport—and the results were not long in making themselves felt.

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[3] This most promising young officer, the son of Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, died on the 23rd of June following of wounds received during a bombardment of Sebastopol, by a portion of the Allied fleet, on the 18th of that month.

While the war was being thus vigorously pressed in the East, the Peace party at home were bent on bringing it to a close. On the 21st of May there stood for discussion in the House of Commons a motion by Mr. Milner Gibson, then Member for Manchester, for an address to the Crown, expressing regret that the opportunity offered by the Vienna Conferences for bringing the negotiations to a pacific issue had not been improved, and asserting, that the interpretation of the Third Point conceded by Russia furnished the elements for renewed Conferences and a good basis for a just and satisfactory peace. It was understood that this motion was to be supported by Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert; but on being assured by Lord Palmerston, in answer to a question from Mr. Sidney Herbert, that the Conferences were not yet closed, and that Austria was still charged with propositions for peace, these gentlemen brought their influence to bear on Mr. Milner Gibson, who consented to postpone his motion until after the Whitsuntide recess. Such was the position of affairs when the Prince wrote the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'I steal a morning hour to send you a little word. Ernest went away on Friday evening, having stayed over the ceremony of distributing the medals, which was really in the highest degree solemn and impressive. The public was very enthusiastically excited and moved, for many a noble form, sadly shattered, passed in that procession.

'The moment is an extremely critical one, and the prospects are not cheerful. The state of France just at this time is anything but tranquillising, to judge by what is reported to us on all hands, and the Peace party are working hard to make the Emperor as unpopular as possible. Canrobert's resignation shows there is something out of sorts in the Army itself. In Vienna, it is becoming every day more apparent that they have not resolved to join in the war, but only to enjoy the advantages of a warlike attitude, and that they mean to use the pretext of an alliance with us for the purpose of fixing upon us a vile and inconclusive (*schlechten*) Peace. Nevertheless, even the new French Ministry stands under Austrian influence.

'Here a combination of the Derbyites, of Layard and his friends, and of Lord Ellenborough, which had for its object to overturn the Ministry, has fallen to pieces. On the other hand, the Peace party, Bright, &c., bring forward a motion this evening for peace *à tout prix*, to which the Peelites (with Gladstone and Graham at their head) will give their adherence!! and which Lord Grey is to follow up by a motion to the same effect in the Upper House—a motion which has been concerted with Aberdeen!! Thus these people will present a public confirmation of all the charges which have been made against them within the last two years, and embitter the nation permanently against them, in a way that will make the reconstruction of a Conservative party impossible.

'Buckingham Palace, 20th May, 1855.'

It had long been surmised that the views of Sir James Graham and his friends, on the subject of the war, were not in harmony with those of the nation generally. But the public were taken by surprise when they learned, that three leading members of the Government, which had sanctioned the expedition to the Crimea, were about to support a motion for a peace, which did not secure the objects by which alone that expedition was justified. Could it be that the Government were about to be parties to such a peace? Was this the condition on which the withdrawal of Mr. Gibson's motion had been secured? Were they true, those whispers which were current, that Lord John Russell had concurred with M. Drouyn de Lhuys in approving the illusory proposals of Austria, of which the general tenor had, by this time, become known in the higher political circles? Fettered as he was by the communications which were still taking place with the French and Austrian Governments, Lord Palmerston could not speak out in terms which would at once have set these apprehensions at rest. The debate on Mr. Milner Gibson's motion had been looked forward to by the Opposition and the war party in the House as the opportunity for coming to a clear understanding as to the Government policy. They were resolved not to be baffled by its postponement. Accordingly Mr. Disraeli, on the 22nd of May, gave notice that on the 24th he would move the following resolution:—

> 'That this House cannot adjourn for the recess without expressing its dissatisfaction with the ambiguous language and uncertain conduct of Her Majesty's Government in reference to the great question of peace or war, and that, under these circumstances, the House feels it a duty to declare, that it will continue to give every support to Her Majesty in the prosecution of the war until Her Majesty shall, in conjunction with her Allies, obtain for the country a safe and honourable peace.'

The speech with which Mr. Disraeli introduced his motion was largely occupied by an attack upon Lord John Russell, in which the vehemence of his former hostility to Russia was contrasted with the yielding spirit which he had shown towards that Power in the Vienna Conferences. For two hours and a half Mr. Disraeli engaged the attention of the House, while he sought to demonstrate, by quotations from the published despatches—enlivened by the brilliancy of sarcasm and invective, which within certain limits are the life of debate—that Lord John Russell had, first as Foreign Minister, and again as Plenipotentiary, compromised the interests of the nation. Nor were the Government, said the speaker, less to blame. They had been weak and vacillating in their action, appealing to Austria as a mediator, and vainly expecting her to be an ally. It was time to end these 'morbid negotiations' for peace, which only inspired distrust in our allies, our generals, our officers, our aristocracy, and to close the Conferences. 'I am against this principle of "leaving the door open."[4] I say,' continued Mr. Disraeli, 'shut the door, and let those who want to come in knock at the door, and then we shall secure a safe and honourable peace.' This we could only hope to effect by a vigorous prosecution of the war. The speech would have been more satisfactory if it had contained any indication of what the terms of a safe and honourable peace would be. But on this point it was silent. As it was, the cheers with which the warlike portions of it were received, showed that no change of opinion had taken place in the House of Commons.

Well assured of this fact, Sir Francis Baring moved an amendment, in which the House, while merely expressing its regret that the Conferences had not led to a termination of hostilities, was asked to adopt the latter part of Mr. Disraeli's motion, which promised support for the war. In the debate which ensued Mr. Gladstone developed the views of the members of the Aberdeen Cabinet, who had seceded from Lord Palmerston's Government. The burden of his speech was to urge peace on the terms offered by Russia, although, as we have already shown, these would have left her preponderance in the Black Sea where it was at the commencement of the war. He acknowledged that he had approved the demand by his colleagues under Lord Aberdeen for a limitation of the Russian fleet; but contended, that Russia having abandoned the pretensions which originally led to the war, to continue it was no longer justifiable. What we now asked for in the way of limitation was, he argued, an indignity to Russia. All the terms which we had originally demanded had been substantially conceded, and if we fought, not for terms, but for military success, let the House look at this sentiment with the eye of reason, and it would appear immoral, inhuman, unchristian.

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[4] France, for obvious reasons, attached much more value to Austria's active co-operation than we did. Austria, as we well knew, had strong reasons not to move in the field against Russia until that Power was, in effect, disabled, for she had insurrections to apprehend both in Hungary and Italy, against which she had to reserve her forces. In writing to the Emperor of the French on the 28th of May, Lord Palmerston expressed his conviction thus: '*Victorieux en Crimée, nous commanderons l'amitié, peut-être même l'épée de l'Autriche; manquant de succès en Crimée, nous n'avons pas même sa plume.*'

The reply to Mr. Gladstone was undertaken by Lord John Russell, who had no difficulty in showing that the condition, that Russia's naval force in the Black Sea must be restricted, was no more an indignity now, than when Mr. Gladstone had joined with his colleagues in the measures, so costly in blood and treasure, by which we were seeking to enforce it. Without such limitation Constantinople could not be secure against the designs of Russia. The refusal of that Power to submit to it was a sure indication, that she continued to cherish these designs, and that the peace of Europe would be again disturbed at no distant date, if the means of aggression were not taken from her by the conditions of peace. Security for Turkey for the future, as well as for the present, was the object of the war. The ambition of Russia was illustrated and denounced by Lord John Russell with a vigour and elaboration of detail, in which no trace of a disposition to accept an unsatisfactory peace was to be observed. In fact, his speech influenced in no slight degree the vote which was taken at the close of a protracted debate next evening, when Mr. Disraeli's motion was negatived by a majority of 100 in a House of 538 members.

The motion of Sir Francis Baring still remained to be discussed, and also an amendment upon it by Mr. Lowe, which proposed to pledge the House to the approval in express terms of a rupture of negotiations on the ground of Russia's refusal to restrict the strength of her navy in the Black Sea. But the debate upon these was adjourned till the 4th of June, after the Easter recess. A motion of Earl Grey's in the House of Lords on the 25th of May, in terms nearly identical with that of Mr. Milner Gibson, and supported by a speech chiefly remarkable for its warm praises of the candour, honesty, and pacific spirit of the late Emperor Nicholas, elicited such strong opinions from every section of the House in condemnation of peace on such terms as Russia was alone disposed to concede, that it was not pressed to a vote.

While these agitating discussions were going on, the Court was at Osborne, where it had gone as usual for Her Majesty's birthday. The severe winter, the Prince notes, had wrought great havoc upon his finer shrubs and plants. Holiday for the Prince meant little more than changing the scene of labour. Still the cares of reading and answering despatches, and of an active correspondence, were lightened by laying out further improvements on the property, and by excursions to Portsmouth to inspect the transports lying there with horses to replace the losses in the Crimea, and to the Needles to inspect the Victoria and Cliff End batteries, part of the Coast defences, in which the Prince had always taken a lively and wakeful interest. While at Osborne, the details were received of the operations on the Sea of Azoff, the results of which were peculiarly gratifying to the Prince, as he had long urged the importance of an attack in this direction. On the 30th of May he writes to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg:—

'We have withdrawn here for ten days for the quiet solemnisation of Victoria's birthday. To-morrow, alas! our holiday is at an end, and then new fatigues and exertions of every kind, in temper, mind, and body, await us in London. Of our negotiations for peace nothing has come; for Russia naturally recoiled from the proposition with which they commenced, "*de mettre fin à sa prépondérance maritime dans la Mer Noire*," and, after what had passed, we could not be content with less. Both intelligible, but unfortunate, and so a fresh campaign begins forthwith.

The same day he writes to Baron Stockmar as follows:—

'We return to town to-morrow, but before doing so I will send you a living token of what we are about. We are well and in good heart, especially since the tidings of the destruction of the forts and ships at the Straits of Kertch, and the entry of our light-draught steam-vessels into the Sea of Azoff, by which we are put in a position to limit the Russian base of operations by way of Perekop, and to penetrate as far as the Don, and either to break up or to destroy their great magazines of supplies. In this way the masses of troops which the Russians are able to bring against us into the Crimea will be limited to an amount for which we are quite a match. Perhaps in summer their numbers must even be reduced.

'In General Pélissier the French have at last once more found a leader, who is capable of forming a decision and acting upon it, and who will rekindle the spirit of the French army which has been dashed by Canrobert's irresolution and want of firmness (*Weichheit*). The recent night-attacks, in which the Russians have lost 6,000 men, are a voucher of the fact. The Sardinians and the French reserves have now arrived, and the army will be able to enter upon the campaign.

'The English troops once more amount to 30,000 men under arms, and their spirit is excellent.

'In diplomacy we are just as badly off as we are well off in the field! Austria seems likely to seal her own shame in the face of all Europe. The new French Ministry is as incapable as might be expected of a man like Walewski, and the Emperor's position most unpleasant!

'The Vienna Conferences, which it would have been better to leave open, must now be closed, if only to get the Ministry rest in Parliament. Oh, Oxenstiern! Oh, Oxenstiern!'[5]

When this letter was written, the French and English Governments had both decided upon closing the Conferences. These were not, however, actually closed till the 5th of June, when the respective Plenipotentiaries of the two countries stated, that they now attended the Conferences at the invitation of the Austrian Ambassador, but that they had no proposal to make. Their Governments considered the refusal of Russia to consent to any limitation of her Black Sea fleet as final, and as no advantage from continuing the Conferences could therefore be expected, they regarded the negotiations as at an end, and the Conferences finally closed.

The Court returned to London on 31st of May. In anticipation of the debate on Sir Francis Baring's motion, in which all the debating power of the House of Commons was sure to be put forth, the Queen and Prince were apprehensive of injury to the national interests in the struggle with Russia, as well as to the reputation of statesmen who had guided, and might be expected again to guide, the destinies of the kingdom, if the example of Mr. Gladstone in the debate on Mr. Disraeli's motion should be followed by those members of Lord Aberdeen's Government with whom he had hitherto acted in concert. The intimate friendship which had so long existed between the Prince and Lord Aberdeen justified him in making the late Premier aware of the impressions produced upon Her Majesty and himself by the line of policy adopted by his late colleagues. He accordingly wrote to him the following letter :—

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[5] The allusion here is to the well-known saying of Count Oxenstiern, 'Oh, my son, mark how little wisdom goes to the government of states!'

'My dear Lord Aberdeen,—I had sent Colonel Phipps to your house, to know whether you were in town, and whether it would be convenient for you to come here for a few minutes before dinner. He has not found you at home, and I am therefore compelled to write to you upon a subject which would have been much better treated in conversation than it can be in a hurried letter—I mean the line which your former friends and colleagues, with the exception of the Duke of Newcastle, have taken about the war question. It has caused the Queen and myself great anxiety, both on account of the position of public affairs and on their own account.

'As to the first, any such declaration as Mr. Gladstone has made upon Mr. Disraeli's motion must not only weaken us abroad in public estimation, and give a wrong opinion as to the determination of the nation to support the Queen in the war in which she has been involved, but render all chance of obtaining an honourable peace without great fresh sacrifices of blood and treasure impossible, by giving new hopes and spirit to the enemy.

'As to the second, a proceeding which must appear to many as unpatriotic in any Englishman, but difficult to explain even by the most consummate oratory on the part of statesmen, who have, up to a very recent period, shared the responsibility of all the measures of the war, and that have led to the war, must seriously damage them in public estimation. The more so, as having been publicly suspected and falsely accused by their opponents of having, by their secret hostility to the war, led to all the omissions, mistakes, and disasters, which have attended the last campaign, they now seem to exert themselves to prove the truth of these accusations, and (as Americans would say) to "realise the whole capital of the unpopularity" attaching to the authors of our misfortunes, whom the public has for so long a time been vainly endeavouring to discover.[6]

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[6] As might have been expected, both these points were dwelt upon with very damaging effect in the debate, which began next day. One passage from the speech of Mr. J. G. Phillimore, akin to many which might be quoted from speakers of greater name, will serve as an illustration. After hearing Mr. Gladstone's recent speech, he said, 'he could comprehend how great and magnificent preparations had shrunk into a miserable defence, how disaster and defeat had sprung from the bosom of victory, and how a fatal and malignant influence had long paralysed the enterprise of our fleets and armies.' Of course there was not even the shadow of a warrant, in fact, for the inference here suggested, but after what had passed, it was sure to take hold of many minds. 'No one,' the speaker continued, 'could hear that speech without feeling that the Emperor of Russia lost powerful auxiliaries in the Cabinet which was overthrown by a debate in the House. What had been the conduct of the right hon. gentleman? He went to Manchester, and told the people there, that it was futile to attempt to prop up the crumbling empire of Turkey; he entered the Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen, and became a party to a war, which had for its express object the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the Porte; he withdrew from office, and came out the advocate of peace and the panegyrist of Russian moderation.' In the course of a very brilliant speech in the same debate, Sir E. B. Lytton made one of his most effective points, when he said, 'When Mr. Gladstone was dwelling, in a Christian spirit that moved them all, on the gallant blood that had been shed by England, by her allies, and by her foemen in that quarrel, did it never occur to him, that all the while he was

'However much on private and personal grounds I grieve for this, I must do so still more on the Queen's behalf, who cannot afford in these times of trial and difficulty to see the best men in the country damaging themselves in its opinion to an extent that seriously impairs their usefulness for the service of the State.

'The whole position reminds me exceedingly of the one taken at the time of the Papal Aggression, when also, whether wisely or not, the Queen, backed by the national feeling, was at issue with a foreign potentate, you all took part with the Pope against the Queen's Government for the sake of peace. And you will remember that, when Lord John Russell's Government broke down in 1851, the Queen had to go through a fruitless Ministerial crisis, which caused many of the anomalies, from which we are suffering even now, and this chiefly on account of the peculiar position in which your party had placed itself.

'I write all this now, because the adjourned debate is to be reopened to-morrow, and I could not reconcile it to myself not to put you in possession of all I feel upon this subject, which I know you will receive in the same spirit in which it is given.

'Ever yours truly,

'ALBERT.

'Buckingham Palace, 3rd June, 1855.'

The debate began on the 4th, but we gather from the following letter by the Prince to Baron Stockmar, that he did not see Lord Aberdeen till the 6th. What passed in this interview the letter explains. It seems to have had little effect in modifying the views of Mr. Sidney Herbert or Sir James Graham, who both spoke in the debate and strongly advocated a cessation of the war on the terms offered by Russia:—

speaking, this one question was forcing itself upon the minds of his English audience, "And shall all this blood have been shed in vain?"'

'The Vienna Conferences are now closed. What the immediate effect of this will be upon Austria we cannot yet calculate, although we may be sure that, as matters now stand, it will not even yet strike a blow.

'Our debate is still proceeding, and, as you will have seen, Cobden and Graham have made Russian speeches. I wrote a fiery (*geharnischten*) letter to Aberdeen, to which he would not reply in writing, but preferred paying me a visit yesterday. In a two hours' discussion I think I satisfied him, that Palmerston has acted precisely as Aberdeen would have acted, although the suspicion that Palmerston did not wish for peace may quite possibly be well founded. Nevertheless, had the Russians been only disposed to accept it, they might have had it, and upon a basis very favourable to them upon the whole.

'The closing of the Conference is an enormous gain for our relations with Paris, where Walewski is quite in Morny's[7] hands, and what that is you know. The Emperor meanwhile is so obstinately wedded to his campaign plan,[8] which he expounded at Windsor, that he is quite unable to appreciate the advantages of the expedition to the Sea of Azoff; and yet we have in one week taken there Kertch and Yenikale, destroyed Arabat, Berdiansk, and Genitschi, annihilated nine steamboats and 240 sailing vessels and six millions of rations for the Russian army, taken thirty ships, 100 cannons, 17,000 tons of coals, 1,000 head of cattle, much provender and ammunition, laid the whole Sea of Azoff under embargo, and cut off all possible communication with the Crimea from the East; which we now know for certain was the chief source of supplies. The expedition is to go to

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[7] M. de Morny had strong Russian proclivities, and was gravely suspected of using his position to promote the designs of Russian diplomacy.

[8] Which would have directed a large expeditionary force upon Simpheropol, so as to prevent reinforcements being sent to Sebastopol.

Taganrog. The Russians have been obliged to evacuate Soujouk Kalé, near Anapa, leaving behind them sixty guns and six mortars. Before Sebastopol the troops have seized the line of the Tschernaja and the valley of Baidar, and can now operate against the line of communication with Bagtschi Serai, which will force the Russians towards the Belbec. Thus military matters are in a very good position.

'I will only hope that you are as well off as regards your health, and that you are repulsing your enemy at all points.

'Buckingham Palace, 7th June, 1855.'

The debate on Sir Francis Baring's motion extended over four nights. The eloquence of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, Sir James Graham, and Mr Sidney Herbert fell flat upon ears that were little inclined to adopt the praises of Russia, with which their speeches abounded, and their views of the terms of peace which should satisfy the Allies for their sacrifices in the war. The arguments of the Peace party found no more strenuous opponent than Lord John Russell. Nor did any portion of his powerful speech elicit a heartier response than the following:—

'I cannot believe that if Russia were left to work her way undisturbedly to the capital of the Turkish Empire, making, perhaps, a little progress in 1855, greater progress ten years hence, and still further twenty years hence, the independence of Europe would be secure. Every one has read the story of the first Napoleon, when engaged with the Emperor Alexander in considering this great question, calling for a map, putting his finger on Constantinople, and after some moments' meditation, exclaiming, "Constantinople! no, it is the empire of the world!" I remember, too, another great man, the Duke of Wellington, saying, I cannot remember exactly on what occasion, that if, in addition to the forces of Russia in the Baltic, she was also, by means of Constantinople, to obtain the command of the Mediterranean, she would be too strong for the rest of the world. That, I believe, is not only the recognised opinion of great statesmen, but it is also the pervading sense of this country, and we must not, therefore, allow Russia, either by a simulated peace, or by open war, to effect the conquest of Constantinople.'

Lord Palmerston wound up the debate, and spoke even more strongly the prevailing sentiment, both of the House and of the country. Some words towards the close of the speech were received with frequent cheers:—

> 'I say, the intention of Russia to partition Turkey is manifest as the sun at noonday, and it is to prevent that that we are contending. That is the object of the war, and not only to defend Turkey, the weak against the strong, but to avert injury and danger from ourselves. Let no man imagine, that if Turkey is destroyed by Russia, and that gigantic power stride like a Colossus from the Baltic on the one hand to the Mediterranean on the other, let no man suppose the great interests of this country would not be in peril; let not the peace-at-all-price party imagine that their commercial interests would not be deeply injured. . . . Trade would soon disappear, were the Mediterranean and the Baltic under the sole command of a Russian naval force, and that Power exercising a dominant control over Germany.'

Lord Palmerston concluded by recommending that Mr. Lowe's amendment should be negatived, and Sir Francis Baring's resolution unanimously agreed to. This course, he reported to the Queen the same evening, 'was acquiesced in by Mr. Walpole and Mr. Gladstone, and adopted by the House.'

The next day the Prince presided at the annual Trinity House dinner, and what he said upon this occasion has probably attracted more attention than any of his speeches. It had been meditated in the quietude of Osborne, and as the leading journal said of it at the time, the Prince had 'put more point into an address that cannot have taken three minutes to utter, than some parliamentary orators can accomplish in two hours.' No one was in a better position than the Prince to know and estimate the difficulties under which a war, on which men's minds are divided, must be carried on against a despotic Power by a country with a free press, and a government whose every action is open to the often impatient challenge of members of both Houses, actuated, it may be, by strong prepossessions, or misled by imperfect information. The country had profited by what the press had done in calling attention to what was going on in the Crimea; but its action was not all for good. Our journals were constantly giving the Russians the information which generals seek for with eagerness, but under great difficulties, through the medium of spies and deserters. 'We do not learn much from you (the French),' the present Emperor had said only a few weeks before to General Lagardie, a French officer, who had been taken prisoner the day before the battle of the Alma. 'It is the English press which gives us information, and certes, it has been most valuable to us.'[9] Our plans had often been thwarted and great loss of life had resulted from this cause; and not only Lord Raglan, but his successor General Simpson,[10] and other officers in responsible positions, had frequently expressed doubts whether England could carry on war, unless the press put some restraint upon their correspondents at the seat of action.

It is to some extent a natural curiosity, which details by correspondents such as we have indicated are meant to gratify; but what lover of his country would not willingly forego the information which he derives from them, rather than cause a moment's embarrassment to those who are fighting his country's battles? To check the evil the Prince seems to have thought that attention had only to be called to it, not merely as it prevailed in the press, but also in the discussions in Parliament by which Ministers were embarrassed in their action, both in diplomacy and in the conduct of the war. The time for frank speaking had come. Who so fit to seize the occasion as himself, who, as the Consort of the Sovereign, had the deepest stake, as well as the warmest interest, in the welfare of the kingdom? It was in proposing the toast of 'Her Majesty's Ministers,' that he spoke as follows:—

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[9] The fact is mentioned in a private Despatch to Lord Clarendon from Lord Cowley, Paris, 25th April, 1855.

[10] 'There is a paragraph in the *Morning Post*,' General Simpson writes to Lord Panmure (24th July, 1855), giving the exact strength of our guards at the trenches, lines of relief, &c. It is very disgusting to read these things, which are read at Sebastopol some days before they reach us here.' The success of the expedition to Kertch was mainly due to the fact, that the English press had no chance of divulging the point on which it was to be directed.

'If there ever was a time when the Queen's Government, by whomsoever conducted, required the support—ay, not the support alone, but the confidence, goodwill, and sympathy of their fellow-countrymen, it is the present. It is not the way to success in war to support it, however ardently and energetically, and to run down and weaken those who have to conduct it. We are engaged with a mighty adversary, who uses against us all those wonderful powers which have sprung up under the generating influence of our liberty and our civilisation, and employs them with all the force which unity of purpose and action, impenetrable secresy, and uncontrolled despotic power give him; whilst we have to meet him under a state of things intended for peace and the promotion of that very civilisation—a civilisation the offspring of public discussion, the friction of parties, and popular control over the government of the State. The Queen has no power to levy troops, and none at her command, except such as voluntarily offer their services. Her Government can entertain no measures for the prosecution of the war without having to explain them publicly in Parliament; her armies and fleets can make no movement, nor even prepare for any, without its being proclaimed by the press; and no mistake, however trifling, can occur, no weakness exist, which it may be of the utmost importance to conceal from the world, without its being publicly denounced, and even frequently exaggerated, with a morbid satisfaction. The Queen's ambassadors can carry on no negotiation which has not to be publicly defended by entering into all the arguments which a negotiator, to have success, must be able to shut up in the innermost recesses of his heart—nay, at the most critical moment, when the complications of military measures and diplomatic negotiations may be at their height, an adverse vote in Parliament may of a sudden deprive her of all her confidential servants.

'Gentlemen, Constitutional Government is under a heavy trial, and can only pass triumphantly through it if the country will grant its confidence—a patriotic, indulgent, and self-denying confidence—to Her Majesty's Government. Without this, all their labours must be in vain.'

There were, of course, people ready to cavil at this speech as though it advocated the superiority of autocratic to constitutional government. But the Prince had the satisfaction of knowing that his real intention was appreciated, not only by all the most influential journalists, but by the country generally. The weighty words with which the *Spectator* closed a thoughtful paper must have given him peculiar pleasure :—

'It may impose some self-sacrifice upon self-sufficiency to be obliged to hold the tongue, when privilege enables us to prattle ; but prattling and questioning may sacrifice the blood of our countrymen ; and certainly a loose talking just now casts grave discredit on the institutions we prize, and on the men to whom these institutions are entrusted ! The true and obvious moral of Prince Albert's admonition is, not to abandon our manifold blessings in order to acquire the military advantages of Russia—which would not be worth the price—but to show that our institutions do not incapacitate us from rivalling the Russian autocracy in its unity of purpose and concentration of action.'

The Prince sent the speech to his venerable Mentor at Coburg, with the following letter :—

'Although I have not heard one syllable from you since you left us, still I will not on that account interrupt my tidings about ourselves. *The Times* now reaches you, I hope, regularly, so that you are able to follow the course of public life here. You will have been horrified at the speeches of the leaders of the Peelite party. To-day Mr. Layard's debate on "Administrative Reform" and "The Right Man in the Right Place" will be concluded. The new Association makes no way, because its object is too vague, and its promoters are too violent, too interested, and untruthful.

'The few words which I spoke last week at the Trinity House, as to the necessity for supporting the Government, which had to conduct the war, have attracted much attention, and produced that decided impression which truth alone is able to produce. I enclose the speech and some newspaper criticisms upon it.

'The Cattle Market, which I opened on Wednesday, is a wonderfully grand and beautiful work, which does the City all possible honour.

'Victoria is well and cheerful; her nerves are tranquil. We are to have visits from Uncle Leopold with the children, the Portuguese (Royal family), and perhaps also the King of Sardinia. When, we do not know, any more than we know when Parliament is to rise. Uncle Leopold appears to be very unwell, for he puts off his journey from day to day, and complains of weakness and fever!

'At the seat of war everything is going on right well. The fall of Anapa is a fresh blow to Russia. Pélissier is a "trouvaille," energetic and determined. Oddly enough, they are in Paris (I mean Louis Napoleon is) very much dissatisfied since all our successes, "low" about our prospects, anxious, &c. I am at a loss to explain why! The advantage of the expedition to the Black Sea, of the taking of the Mamelon and Port du Carénage, is in no degree acknowledged; nothing but complaints, that the *opérations extérieures* have not been undertaken.

'The nomination of the Grand Duke Constantine as regent leads to the inference that the young Emperor will soon be taking his departure, and ought to put Germany on the alert, for that is a dangerous neighbour.

'Austria is out of humour with herself, with God, and the world, and has every reason to be so, for by a half-and-half policy she has brought herself into a position that redounds little to her honour.

'Buckingham Palace, 17th June, 1855.'

This elicited from Baron Stockmar the following characteristic reply, in which he hits what he felt to be an important omission in the Prince's speech, but one which was in fact due solely to an unlucky slip of memory in delivering it:—

'Your Royal Highness's speech was full of matter, and very well timed. That the press should try to weaken the lesson it conveyed by the assertion, that the advantages of the Constitutional system counterbalanced its disadvantages, was to be expected. But this assertion is only true, so far as a free Constitution develops a greater amount of material and moral forces than the forms of despotic government. What has in practice to be chiefly aimed at is the proper organisation of some one given force, and every free Constitution increases the difficulty of devising and putting into shape measures which meet the necessities of the hour. This difficulty must somehow or other be got over, otherwise it may very easily be, that an inferior, but well-organised force shall overthrow one that is superior, but is wanting in concentration.

'Let me add, that I miss in the speech a saving clause, which by anticipation should meet the charge that the Prince, because of the disadvantages of the Constitutional system, is at heart inclined to award the preference to the despotic form of government.'

To this the Prince replied :—

'It has given me very great pleasure to see your handwriting once more, even though you are only able to tell me of continued indisposition. In such times words of consolation do no good, and all the eloquence of lookers-on is powerless to alter the feelings of the patient, nay, are not unlikely to make him impatient, and thereby to aggravate his sufferings. That cannot be my object, so I confine myself to this piece of advice, that the first moment you feel a return of strength should be taken advantage of for a journey to Gastein, and for calling to your aid the beneficent influence of the water and glorious mountain air there.

'I am delighted that you like my speech. The reproach that I have omitted a saving clause is quite just. There it was upon the paper, but it did not flow (why I know not) from the lips. . . .[11]

'The miscarriage of the attack [at Sebastopol] on the 18th was a sad affair! Now the cholera has made its appearance again as enemy. General Estcourt, Admiral Boxer, and many others of our best people have died of it. The malady has been especially severe on the Sardinians. The Russians are suffering fearfully, as was only to be expected. We are kept in hot water by the disquiet of our Imperial neighbour, who is continually sending telegraphic orders, to which, it is true, Pélissier does not pay much heed, but he thereby places himself in a very perilous position, especially as the other Generals are allowed to send home reports about him. This is *a terrible mistake*

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[11] Apparently no draft or copy of the speech, as intended to be spoken, was preserved by the Prince. We are, therefore, unable to restore the missing words.

(*ungeheuer fehlerhaft*). Persigny, who goes to Paris to-day to fetch his wife, has promised me to represent the danger to his master. This M. Persigny approves himself a quite straightforward, honourable, and well-meaning man, madly imprudent and naturalistic, and often very droll. To Lord Clarendon he will say, when they meet in conference: "*Ce pauvre Walewski m'a écrit une dépêche. Voulez-vous que je vous la lise?*" "*S'il vous plaît.*" "*Ah, je l'ai laissée à la maison, mais n'importe: elle ne vaut pas la peine!*" He is very fond of philosophizing, and I have had many discussions with him, which, as I could not always coincide with his views, have ended in his taking me to his heart.

'Uncle Leopold comes on Tuesday with Philippe and Charlotte; and by the end of the week we purpose to get away from the thoroughly used-up air of London. The political folly and levity of parties and the press, amidst the terrible mass of business, makes one's head reel.

'Buckingham Palace, 28th June, 1855.'

CHAPTER LXV.

The failure of the assault on the 18th of June, alluded to by the Prince in his letter just quoted, was the first serious check which the Allies had received. On the 7th they had met with a signal success, the French having taken the Mamelon, and the position known as the *Ouvrages Blancs*, and the English the Gravel Pits, a Russian outwork in front of the Redan. Emboldened by their success, a simultaneous attack upon the Malakoff and the Redan had been resolved on. Against his own conviction, which was that the Redan could not be taken by direct assault, but, if the Malakoff fell, would be at the mercy of the besiegers, Lord Raglan yielded to the urgent demands of General Pélissier, that the attack on both should be made together. The result realised his worst anticipations; and the Allies were repulsed with heavy loss at both points.

This reverse probably took more life out of the brave old soldier than all he had undergone in the severity of the winter and the anxieties of the siege, and, what was worse, in the merciless attacks to which he had been subjected at home. On the 24th he was seized with illness, and he died on the 29th. The tidings reached the Queen the same day. What grief they spread in the Palace will best be shown by the letter which Her Majesty at once addressed to Lady Raglan:—

'Buckingham Palace, 30th June, 1855.

'Dear Lady Raglan,—Words cannot convey all I feel at the irreparable loss you have sustained, and I and the country also, in your noble, gallant, and excellent husband, whose loyalty and devotion to his sovereign and country were unbounded. We both feel most deeply for you and your daughters, to whom this blow must be most severe and sudden. He was so strong and his health had borne the bad climate, the great fatigues, and anxieties so well, ever since he left England, that, though we were much alarmed at hearing of his illness, we were full of hopes of his speedy recovery.

'We must bow to the will of God! But to be taken away thus, on the eve of the successful result of so much labour, so much suffering, and so much anxiety, is hard indeed!

'We feel much, too, for the brave army, whom he was so proud of, and who will be sadly cast down at losing their gallant commander, who had led them so often to victory and glory.

'If sympathy can be any consolation, you have it, for we all have alike to mourn, and no one more than I, who have lost a faithful and devoted servant, in whom I had the greatest confidence.

'We both most anxiously hope, that your health, and that of your daughters, may not materially suffer from this dreadful shock. Believe me always, my dear Lady Raglan,

'Yours very sincerely,

'VICTORIA R.'

In a letter to Baron Stockmar a few days later (7th July) the Prince, speaking of Lord Raglan's death, says:—

'Since I last wrote to you, we have added Lord Raglan to our losses. Spite of all that has been said and written against him, *an irreparable loss* for us! There is something tragic in the manner of his death. That he should survive the disaster of the bloody assault on Waterloo day, and then die of sickness! The 18th was the nail in his coffin, for he knew that his troops could do nothing under the circumstances which Pélissier had created, and to give them the order to attack was to send them to certain death; and yet, had he not done so, the French army would have believed he was deserting them in the hour of need, and ascribed their serious losses to him alone.[1] The choice must have been infinitely hard for him. And yet the French insinuate, and, what is worse, *The Times* (*!!!*) does so too, that Lord Raglan is alone to blame.'

In the same letter the Prince announces, with no small satisfaction, that the Court, together with King Leopold, and his son and daughter, are to leave London for Osborne on the 10th. 'We are quite exhausted,' he adds, 'by the heat, and the winding up of the affairs of the season.'

Among the multifarious subjects of public and social interest, which at this time, as indeed at all times, engaged the Prince's attention, was one, which only now after an interval of twenty-two years, seems likely to be taken up and dealt with seriously. An entry in his Diary on the 4th of July mentions that he had, in concert with the Sub-Dean of Westminster, Lord John Thynne, drawn up a plan for the removal of Westminster School into the country, pulling down all the old buildings connected with it, and throwing open the ground adjoining the Abbey as a park to the public. The eminently practical mind of the Prince would not have entertained a project so large in its proportions, and involving so considerable an expenditure of public money, had he not considered it to be essential to the welfare of the time-honoured School, as well as called for by a just regard to the safety and the beauty of the great national Cathedral and Campo Santo.

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[1] 'I always guarded myself from being tied down to attack at the same moment as the French, and I felt that I ought to have some hope of their success before I committed our troops; but when I saw how stoutly they were opposed, I considered it was my duty to assist them by attacking myself, and both Sir George Brown and General Jones, who were by my side, concurred with me in thinking, that we should not delay to move forward. Of this I am quite certain, that, if the troops had remained in our trenches, the French would have attributed their non-success to our refusal to participate in the operation.'—*Private Despatch, Lord Raglan to Lord Panmure,* 19th June, 1855.

Although the affairs of 'the season,' in the fashionable sense, might have been wound up, Parliament was still to be the scene of some of the fiercest conflicts of a Session, which had already been prolific of unusually animated debates. The very warlike tone of Lord John Russell in the recent debates upon the peace proposals had led to a manifesto from Count Buol, the Austrian Plenipotentiary at the Vienna Conferences, in which attention was called to the inconsistency of Lord John Russell's language to Parliament with that which he had held, in common with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, in his confidential interviews with Count Buol at Vienna, where both Ministers, Count Buol stated, 'showed themselves decidedly inclined to our (the Austrian) proposal, and undertook to recommend the same to their Governments with all their influence.' On this document being made public, Mr. Milner Gibson lost no time in seizing the vantage ground which it gave to himself and his friends of the Peace party. Accordingly, on the 6th of July, he asked, in his place in Parliament, for explanations from the Government of their opposition to the views of their colleague and Plenipotentiary. If the facts were, as stated by Count Buol, how was Lord John Russell's approval of the Austrian proposal to be reconciled with his remaining in office to carry on the war?

It was only too clear that our Plenipotentiary had made a series of irreparable mistakes; first, in countenancing proposals which were wholly incompatible with the instructions of both the English and French Governments; next, in not having retired from the Cabinet, with which he was at direct variance as to what were and were not satisfactory terms of peace; and again, when he threw himself into the front rank to advocate a war policy, which by his admissions at Vienna—admissions which were certainly as well known to Prussia and Russia as to the Allied Governments—he had in fact condemned. Nothing was needed beyond Lord John Russell's own reply, to point the invectives which it provoked from Mr. Cobden, Mr. Roebuck, and Mr. Disraeli. For in that reply he admitted, that in his view the Austrian proposal might, and ought to have put an end to the war, and led to a safe and honourable peace; and that he retained this opinion, notwithstanding the representations of his colleagues, on his return from Vienna, but had remained in office from a sense of the public inconvenience, which at so critical a period must ensue from a fresh change in the Government arrangements so soon after the recent Ministerial crisis. It was obvious that no such plea would be accepted either by the party who, with Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Gladstone at their head, were clamouring for peace, or by the much more numerous party in the House, who were bent on a vigorous prosecution of the war, but distrusted the sincerity of the Government in carrying out the wish of the nation. Well might Lord Palmerston, in sending a précis of the discussion to the Queen, say, 'this evening in the House of Commons has not been an agreeable one.'

What had passed in the House created great excitement in the country. The temptation which it afforded for dealing a blow at the Ministry was irresistible, and on the 10th of July Sir E. Bulwer Lytton gave notice of the following motion:—'That the conduct of our Minister in the recent negotiations at Vienna has, in the opinion of this House, shaken the confidence of this country in those to whom its affairs are entrusted.' Two days later Lord John Russell explained to the House, that although at the end of April, and in the first days of May, he thought the Austrian propositions might have been assented to, he did not consider that they could now, 'after the events and proceedings which have since occurred,' form the foundation of a satisfactory peace. Neither the House nor the public showed any disposition to accept the statement in mitigation of their displeasure at the position in which they found themselves placed, before their adversary and Europe, of carrying on a war, condemned by a leading member of the executive government. The explanation was generally regarded only as making bad worse. Indeed, such was the prevailing excitement, that the stability of the Ministry was in danger, a danger so imminent, that it was even doubtful if the resignation of Lord John Russell could avert it. To himself it must have been apparent that his continuance in office could only embarrass and endanger his colleagues; and on the 13th he placed his resignation in Lord Palmerston's hands. On the 16th, the day appointed for the discussion of Sir E. B. Lytton's motion, Lord John Russell himself announced to the House that he was no longer a Minister. The danger was averted. Public distrust was appeased, for by this time it was well ascertained, that Lord John Russell had stood alone in his views, and Sir E. B. Lytton withdrew his motion with the general approval of the House.

Even the opponents of the Government must have rejoiced at this result. These were not times to allow party or personal feelings to predominate in the national councils. The words of the Prince's Trinity House speech, recommending unity of action, had sunk into men's minds, and were probably not without effect in tempering the tactics of the Opposition. He seems, however, from the following passage in a letter to Baron Stockmar from Osborne, on the 16th, to have felt uncertain down to the last as to the fate of the Ministry.

After announcing to the old physician that Princess Louise, and the Princes Arthur and Leopold, had been seized with scarlet fever, and telling him of all that had been done to isolate them, to prevent the infection from spreading, more especially to the children of the King of the Belgians, who, along with their father, were then the Queen's guests at Osborne, the Prince continues:—

'In politics also we have fresh causes for uneasiness at home. Lord John is compromised by Count Buol's publication, on account of the expressions which he made use of at Vienna, as to which questions have been put to him in the House of Commons, where he has roused so much indignation by his answers, that all parties have combined to upset the Ministry. He has resigned; but it still remains to be seen whether the excitement of parties will be appeased by the sacrifice. . . . To-day the debate commences on a motion by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton of want of confidence.'

Next day Mr. Roebuck brought forward a motion, founded on the report of his Committee of Inquiry, for a vote of censure on Lord Aberdeen's Ministry, as the cause of the sufferings of our army during the winter campaign in the Crimea. The feeling of the public as to those whom they had at one time regarded as the authors of those calamities, had by this time become greatly modified. It had run into other channels—bitterness against the members of Lord Aberdeen's Ministry, who were now in the same ranks with the Peace party—and a determination not to pursue vindictively the men who had done their best to grapple with a defective system and with unforeseen emergencies, but to turn the sad experiences of the war to account by avoiding the errors from which they had sprung. The past could not be mended,—best leave it alone, was, in a word, the prevailing sentiment. It was expressed by General Peel, when he moved 'the previous question,'—an amendment which the House adopted, after two nights of debate, by a majority of 107 in a House of 471 members.

The very next night, however, the Government narrowly escaped a serious defeat. By a Convention concluded with Turkey on the 26th of June, the Governments of France and England undertook to guarantee the payment of the interest of a loan of 5,000,000*l.* to Turkey. The French Chambers had already sanctioned this Convention, but the Resolutions introduced with a similar object by Lord Palmerston on the 20th of July met with an opposition as determined as it was unexpected. The money was absolutely necessary to enable the Porte to bear its share of the costs of the war; but without the guarantee proposed there was no chance of its being raised. To have repudiated the transaction would have been an outrage to our Allies, who might well have shrunk from further co-operation with an Executive, whose most solemn engagements were liable to be rendered nugatory by a Parliamentary vote. What stronger confirmation could have been given of the difficulties of a constitutional government than the possibility of such a result? And yet the Resolutions were only carried by a majority of three, the numbers being 135 to 132. On reflection many of those who had voted in the minority saw that they had made a mistake, and the Bill to give effect to the Resolutions was passed without further opposition.

In writing to Baron Stockmar on the 25th of July, the Prince speaks of this critical incident thus:—

'After Lord John's embarrassing escapade, the Peelites got into a fresh scrape by suddenly combining with all the fractions of the Opposition in an attempt to upset the Turkish loan. The Ministry scraped through with a majority of three!! otherwise the treaty which had been concluded, and already ratified, with Turkey and France, would have been broken and flung overboard. All "for a more vigorous prosecution of the war," so runs the talk.'

The subject of peace or war was again brought before the

House on the 30th of July by Mr. Laing, in moving for further papers relative to the Vienna Conferences. The debate was chiefly remarkable for a powerful speech by Mr. Gladstone, strongly marked by Russian sympathies, in support of the Austrian proposals, and in which the position of the Allies was depicted in the most unfavourable colours, and the continuance of the war urgently deprecated. The debate dropped without a division; but upon the 7th of August Lord John Russell, on the third reading of the Consolidated Fund Appropriation Bill, took occasion to revive the subject by a long speech on the prospects of the war, the probabilities of peace, and the position of the Continental States. To this speech Lord Palmerston replied, and while expressing the determination of his Government to give effect to the wishes of the country and to compel a satisfactory peace by an unflinching prosecution of the war, he alluded to the position taken up by Mr. Gladstone in his recent speech in the following terms:—

'No man could have been a party to entering into the great contest in which we are engaged—no man, at least, ought to have been a party to such a course of policy—without having deeply weighed the gravity of the struggle into which he was about to plunge the country, and without having satisfied his mind that the cause was just, that the motives were sufficient, and that the sacrifices which he was calling upon the country to make were such as a statesman might consider it ought to endure. Sir, there must indeed be grave reasons which could induce a man who had been a party with Her Majesty's Government to that line of policy, who had assisted in conducting the war, who had, after full and, perhaps, unexampled deliberation, agreed to enter upon the war, who, having concurred after that full and mature deliberation in the commencement of the war, had also joined in calling upon the country for great sacrifices in order to continue it, and who had, up to a very recent period, assented to all the measures proposed for its continuance; I say, there must, indeed, be grave reasons which could induce a man, who had been so far a party to the measures of the Government, utterly to change his opinions, to declare this war unnecessary, unjust, and impolitic, to set before the country all the imaginary disasters with which his fancy could supply him, and to magnify and exaggerate the force of the enemy and the difficulties of our position.'

In this part of Lord Palmerston's speech he struck a note which wakened a lively response both in the House and in the country. Nor was he less sure of their sympathy, when in referring to the argument used by some of the Peace party, that Turkey had herself been satisfied with the Austrian proposals, he said, that the objects for which the war was undertaken were far too wide and important to depend solely upon the decision of the Turkish Government. The protection of Turkey was one of these objects, but only one, and not for the sake of Turkey merely, but as a means to an end. Beyond the mere question of the defence of Turkey, was the larger object of repressing the grasping ambition of Russia; an ambition, he continued, 'which aims at the moral and physical subjugation of the Continent of Europe, and the extinction of those principles of political and commercial liberty upon which the independent existence of the kingdoms of Europe must mainly depend.' The Governments of England and France, therefore, had, in his view, as great, and perhaps a greater interest, in the question what the terms of peace should be, than the Government of Turkey itself.

On the 14th of August Parliament was prorogued by Commission. The session had not been altogether barren of measures of importance. The first of the Acts for regulating the local government of the metropolis, and for the establishment of Joint Stock companies with limited liability, were passed. Measures were also passed for improving the Constitutions of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, and the stamp duty on newspapers was abolished. In the Queen's Speech the French alliance was dwelt upon with marked emphasis. Her Majesty trusts, it said, 'that an alliance founded on a sense of the general interests of Europe, and consolidated by good faith, will long survive the events which have given rise to it, and will contribute to the permanent well-being and prosperity of the two great nations, whom it has linked in the bonds of honourable friendship.' This language was felt to be most appropriate, on the eve of the visit which the Queen and Prince were within the next few days to pay to the Emperor at Paris, and which was now being looked forward to on both sides of the Channel with the liveliest interest.

The Emperor had wished that the visit should exceed considerably in length that which the Empress and himself had paid in England; and had suggested a programme to fill up the time, the attractions of which were difficult to resist. But the visit had to be restricted to eight days, for reasons expressed in the following passage of a letter from Lord Clarendon to Lord Cowley (7th July):—

> 'The Emperor is, I believe, aware, that the Queen's life is one of incessant occupation and fatiguing business, but he may perhaps not know, that it is absolutely indispensable for her health to pass some weeks in Scotland, and to be invigorated by the mountain air. She cannot remain there after the first week in October, and she cannot this year arrive before the first week in September. I am sure, therefore, that consideration for Her Majesty will outweigh with the Emperor any feeling of disappointment he may entertain, that the Queen's visit will not be quite so long as he has kindly desired it should be.'

It was accordingly arranged that the visit should begin on Saturday the 18th and terminate on Monday the 27th of August.

Before that time several important incidents in connection with the war had taken place. The Baltic Fleet, under Rear-Admiral Dundas, after several minor operations, in concert with the French squadron addressed itself to the bombardment of Sweaborg—an operation which, for want of gunboats, Sir Charles Napier had declined to hazard in 1854. On the morning of the 9th of August the bombardment was opened. Shot, shell, and rockets rained into the fortress from our gun and mortar boats, and the batteries which the French had established on one of the many neighbouring islands. The bombardment was continued with little intermission till four o'clock on the morning of the 11th, by which time it was computed, that no less than a thousand tons of shot and shell had been thrown into the place by the English alone. Finding the destruction of the stores and arsenals and every building of importance to be complete, the Admiral resolved to make no further attempt on the fortifications themselves, as this must have cost many lives, without any corresponding advantage, even if successful. As it was, he was able, when reporting to the Admiralty on the 11th the success of his operations in the destruction of this important arsenal and dockyard, to add that few casualties had occurred, and that no lives had been lost in the Allied fleets.

Since the repulse of the 18th of June before Sebastopol, the besiegers had been pushing forward their approaches with so much energy, that it was obvious to their adversaries that a decisive assault was imminent. On the 21st of July General Simpson, who had been confirmed in the command-in-chief as successor to Lord Raglan, reported to Lord Panmure, that his advanced trenches were within 200 yards of the Redan, and could not be pushed farther. He at the same time said, that the Redan was now much stronger than it had been on the 16th of June, and that any direct attack upon it must fail. A combined attack by French and English on the Malakoff, he added, was in his opinion the only feasible project, that being the key of the position, and at the same time presenting fewer obstacles to an attack. The daily losses in the trenches were so heavy, that the assault could not be much longer delayed. All were therefore looking forward to the moment when General Pélissier should declare his readiness for the assault.

The information which reached us as to the condition of the Russian forces showed, that their supplies of food and ammunition were beginning to fail. But we also learned, that the whole military resources of the country were being concentrated on the Crimea, with a view to some supreme effort. Men without end, it was said, were being sent thither as reserves, and a great blow would shortly be struck at the besieging forces. That Prince Gortschakoff had not attacked them before, it was reported on high authority, was because he had not hitherto had sufficient men. Now everything he could desire had been placed at his disposal for carrying out his plan of bringing an overwhelming force against the Allies, and the numbers at his command were said to be so great, that it was thought they must bear down any resistance. Experience of former encounters had taught us to fear little from superior numbers. And while we were thus warned to anticipate an overwhelming onslaught by the Russian army of reserve, we were encouraged to regard the reports with less apprehension, by knowing at what a frightful sacrifice of life the enemy was bringing up the hordes on which he relied so confidently to destroy us. The route from Sebastopol to Simpheropol, it was ascertained upon the authority of a Russian eye-witness, speaking at St. Petersburg, was already so encumbered with dead bodies, dead horses and dead cattle, that the whole line was infected with pestilential vapours, was impassable for vehicles, and could only be traversed on horseback.

The threatened blow was struck on the 16th of August at what is now known as the Battle of the Tschernaja. The attack on the position of the Allies on that river was planned at St. Petersburg, and it had been looked forward to there as certain to result in the raising of the siege. From fifty to sixty thousand Russians were engaged in it. The brunt of the attack had to be borne by the French, and they threw it back with a firmness and vigour on which the weight of the Russian columns could make no impression. The battle, which had begun while the mists of the dawn hung heavily upon the valley of the Tschernaja, had been decided by 9 A.M., by which time it had become obvious, that the Russians were in full retreat. The French loss in killed was comparatively small. The loss of the Russians was estimated at about 3,000 killed, and 5,000 wounded. Four hundred prisoners were taken. On the bodies of the dead were found four days' rations, but no water, so confident had their leaders been of securing their hold upon the Tschernaja. 'The men dead in the field,' General Bernard wrote to Colonel Phipps (18th August), 'looked worn and miserable; the Grenadiers of the Guard were there, men 6 feet 4! and well dressed, but thin and worn also. The generality were men . . . . badly clothed, and badly fed, many very young.' All this told a tale of exhaustion, which gave fresh encouragement to the Allies. The annihilation of the stores on the Sea of Azoff had begun to tell. If the forces already on the spot bore such evident marks of being badly fed, there was little to be apprehended from any further reinforcements of men which Russia might be able to send to the front, as they must increase the embarrassment of the enemy from the already failing supplies of provisions.

The brilliant success of the French on the Tschernaja came most opportunely to stimulate the feelings of their countrymen at home in favour of the prosecution of the war. Some such stimulus was needed. The war had appealed to no French national sentiment, it offered no palpable material gain, it inspired no popular enthusiasm. It had already involved large sacrifices in men and money, and a peace, which might secure the balance of power in Europe, but gave France not an inch of additional territory, offered but a sorry premium for further drains on the national resources. The current talk in the higher circles in Paris was, that France was merely playing the game of England, and those in whom the old jealousies of this country still lingered saw, not without chagrin, that we were so rapidly redeeming the defects of our system, which had drawn upon us so much contemptuous obloquy some months before, as a nation whose fighting powers were used up, that our superiority in all the qualities necessary for success in the field was likely before long to become established beyond all question. It was said at this time by one of the best informed politicians in France, that the facts which appeared in official reports and private correspondence, compelled their statesmen to acknowledge that English officers were superior to their own in practical ability, in military *coup-d'œil*, in sagacity and foresight. ‘They have better understood the nature of the dangers to be met, and the means to overcome them. England,’ it was added, ‘will come out of this war with a perfect military organisation, and with a formidable army. She will be indebted for this to the French Alliance. There is wisdom and foresight on our part! We are wide awake to this fact. We know the tough mettle of English statesmen. They will find the way to repair the errors into which they have been led by false systems of economy; and in proof of this, we see the House of Commons, despite the persevering interference of the Opposition, refusing the Government nothing they ask for. The war, beyond all doubt, will augment England's strength and influence both abroad and at home.’

Such being the prevalent tone of opinion in Paris, the success of the Tschernaja was manifestly well timed, both for strengthening the Emperor's hands in carrying on the war against the manifold influences which were at work to shake his resolution, and as a prelude to the arrival in France of the English Queen. No English Sovereign had set foot within Paris since Henry VI., and he had come there claiming to be its king, and not, as now, to knit more closely the bonds of an alliance necessary to the repose of Europe. There were, it is true, Frenchmen high in position who predicted, that no such reception would await our Queen in Paris as had greeted the Emperor and Empress in London. Such show of welcome as might be given would be organised, not spontaneous. No enthusiasm would be awakened. The Legitimists would look coldly on a visit, which would give prestige and stability to the Emperor. The Orleanists, embittered at the cordiality of an alliance with one whom they regarded as an usurper, an alliance more close, more truly cordial, than that which Louis Philippe had affected to cement, would take care to mark their estrangement by holding aloof from every demonstration of welcome. The mass of the Parisians, on the other hand, were said so have become too much absorbed in the pursuit of gain to set a value on whatever dignity might be added to their country by the friendly visit of the English Sovereign; while the extreme Democrats would show no honour to the guests, however illustrious, of the Man of December.

Such were the predictions current in many influential quarters as to the probable failure of the visit of the Queen and Prince to France. How completely they were falsified will presently be shown.

CHAPTER LXVI.

EVEN in his busiest times the Prince seems generally to have made leisure to keep up his correspondence with Baron Stockmar. But such was the pressure upon him at this time, that he did not write to him for nearly a month, although he knew how anxious his old friend would be for tidings from himself, not merely about public affairs, but about the progress of the Royal children, four in number, who had been attacked by scarlet fever. On the 4th of August the Prince was able to announce to him that, although the Princess Alice, who had caught the fever from her sister, was still a prisoner to her room, the Princess Louise and the Princes Arthur and Leopold were convalescent. The two elder children had escaped the infection, and were to accompany the Queen and Prince to Paris on the 18th. The Prince adds:

'I often think of your illustration of the peasant who wants to wait till the river runs by before he crosses.[1] This is what happens with my wish to write to you, and to find a quiet morning for doing so. Only yesterday the King of Portugal arrived with his suite, and he establishes a claim upon the day, which is already heavily forestalled. He lives on board our new yacht, so as to keep clear of infection in the house, and we interchange visits by boat. They are well, and Pedro is much and earnestly engrossed with his future great and difficult vocation. I counsel him to separate everything that is merely personal from what is essential, and to concern himself only with the latter. All the misfortunes of Portugal have arisen from dealing exclusively with the former.'

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[1] *Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille*
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.—Horace, *Epist.* i. 2.

In the same letter, written before the Russian defeat on the Tschernaja had materially altered the aspect of affairs at Sebastopol, he says :—

'In the Crimea no progress is making, and another winter stares us in the face.' This was the opinion of many officers on the spot, who were in the best position for forming a judgment.[2] Whether we were to remain there as besiegers or as masters of Sebastopol, was a problem of which they did not at this time venture to forecast the solution. Their hopes began to rise soon afterwards, as symptoms of exhaustion, and of preparations for a retreat to the south side of the harbour, began to become apparent in the Russian defence.

The aspect of affairs, as we have seen, had brightened considerably before the day appointed for the arrival in Paris of the Queen and Prince. He seized his first spare moment after his arrival there to let Baron Stockmar know, that all had gone off well up to this point. On the morning of the 19th he writes to the Baron from St. Cloud :—

'I avail myself of the first disengaged moment to send you tidings of us from St. Cloud. We arrived here yesterday evening at half-past eight, and met with a splendid and enthusiastic reception in Paris. I leave description to the papers, whose *métier* it is, and only tell you that we are all well, that we found the Emperor in high spirits, the Empress in expectation of an heir and suffering, the nation flattered and friendly. The destruction of Sweaborg, the success of Riga, and the defeat of the Russians on the Tschernaja, have contributed to put people on all sides into good humour. Bertie, Vicky, Ladies Ely and Churchill, Misses Bulteel and Hildyard, Lords Clarendon, Breadalbane, and Abercorn, Phipps, Grey, Biddulph, Clark, Gibbs and Alfred Paget, make up our party. To-day is Sunday repose (!) and English Church service. To-morrow the Parisian campaign begins.'

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[2] 'The dark prospect of another winter looms before us. It must be looked in the face, but it is a precious ugly thing to look at.'—*Letter from General Codrington to Sir George Brown*, July 27, 1855, of which there is a copy among the Prince's papers.

In recounting the leading features of the visit to the French capital, we are again enabled to avail ourselves of the Diary of the Queen, who felt naturally prompted to preserve a record under her own hands of an historical event of so much interest and importance. Starting from Osborne at five on the morning of the 18th, the Royal yacht, *Victoria and Albert*, which had just been completed, reached Boulogne about half-past one, and advanced slowly up to the harbour amid the cheers of the crowd upon the long pier, which was lined throughout with troops. On the quay stood the Emperor, surrounded by a brilliant retinue, under a broiling sun, while the tedious process of warping the huge vessel to the shore was carried out. 'At length the bridge was adjusted. The Emperor stepped across, and I met him half-way, and embraced him twice; after which he led me on shore amidst acclamations, salutes, and every sound of joy and respect. We four [the Queen, Prince, Prince of Wales, and Princess Royal] entered a landau carriage, and drove through the crowded and decorated streets, the Emperor escorting us himself on horseback,' to the railway-station, which was thronged with an enthusiastic crowd, largely composed of ladies.

Brief halts were made at Abbeville and Amiens, where the same crowds and the same eager welcome awaited the Royal visitors. The beauty of the country between Amiens and

Paris arrested the Queen's attention; but by this time 'the sun got lower, and the Emperor became very anxious we should reach Paris. . . . At length we passed St. Leu, Montmorency—both charmingly situated—then got a glimpse of Montmartre, my first sight of Paris . . . . and at last we passed the fortifications and Paris opened upon us. . . . We at length entered the *Gare du Chemin de Fer de Strasbourg*, which was lit up and beautifully decorated, lined with troops, and filled with people; Prince Napoleon, Maréchal Magnan, General Löwestein commanding the Garde Nationale. The *coup-d'œil*, as we proceeded to our carriage, was magnificent.'

Paris was *en fête*, and what that means in a city so favourable for festal effects, need not be said. The inhabitants had belied the anticipations to which we referred in the last chapter, by doing everything that taste and good feeling could suggest to mark the sincerity of their welcome. Imagine, the Royal Diary continues, this beautiful city, with its broad streets and lofty houses, 'decorated in the most tasteful manner possible, with banners, flags, arches, flowers, inscriptions, and finally illuminations, full of people, lined with troops, National Guards, and troops of the Line and Chasseurs d'Afrique, beautifully kept, and most enthusiastic! And yet this gives but a faint notion of this triumph, as it was. There were endless cries of "*Vive la Reine d'Angleterre!*" "*Vive l'Empereur!*" "*Vive le Prince Albert!*" The approaching twilight rather added to the beauty of the scene; and it was still quite light enough when we passed down the new *Boulevard de Strasbourg* (the Emperor's creation), and along the Boulevards, by the Porte St. Denis, the Madeleine, the Place de la Concorde, and the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile.' Here the light failed, as the Royal cortége pursued its way through the Bois de Boulogne to St. Cloud. Troops, with their bands playing 'God save the

Queen,' lined the whole route from the railway to the Palace, 'artillery, cavalry, Cent-Gardes (who are splendid), and last, but not least, to my great delight, at the Bridge of Boulogne near the village and Palace of St. Cloud, the Zouaves, splendid troops in splendid dress, the friends of my dear Guards.

'In all this blaze of light from lamps and torches, amidst the roar of cannon, and bands, and drums, and cheers, we reached the Palace. The Empress, with Princess Mathilde and the ladies, received us at the door, and took us up a beautiful staircase, lined with the splendid *Cent-Gardes*, who are magnificent men, very like our Life Guards. . . . We went through the rooms at once to our own, which are charming. . . . I felt quite bewildered, but enchanted; . . . . everything is so beautiful!'

What is said by the Queen of the beauty of the Palace is interesting now that it has been battered and burnt into irretrievable ruin. 'The saloons are splendid, all *en suite;* they, as well as the courtyard, staircase, &c., remind me of Brühl. The ceilings are beautifully painted and the walls hung with Gobelins. The Salle de Mars is a very noble room and opens into the fine long gallery called *La Salle de Diane*, in which we dined. The room was terribly hot, for the table was covered with wax-lights, which quite dazzled me. Everything was magnificent, and all very quiet, and royal. . . . Everybody most civil and kind. Maréchal Magnan told me that such enthusiasm as we had witnessed had not been known in Paris, not even in the time of the Emperor Napoleon's triumphs; and General Löwestein said, that all France would have come if there had been time. The National Guard were particularly civil and friendly. All regretted our arriving so late.

'*Sunday*, 19*th August.*—Awoke to admire our lovely room. The whole suite was no less charming.' Some of the rooms commanded a fine view of Paris, others looked out on the garden, 'with its fountains and beautiful long avenues of beech-trees, its orange-trees, and very fine and brilliant flowers.' After breakfast came a drive with the Emperor in the park, which, with its endless shady avenues, its beautiful foliage, and charming glimpses of country, has still happily survived the ravages of the siege of 1871 and the worse fury of the Communists. 'We passed *Villeneuve l'Etang*, the little villa which the Emperor has bought, with the surrounding ground and park, and which he tries to make as English and as private as possible, longing to get away from etiquette and restraint. . . . The Emperor was most amiable and kind, and talked of all sorts of things. He is much pleased at the good news from the Crimea.'

The English service was read in one of the rooms of the Palace by the chaplain of the Embassy; and in the afternoon the Queen and Prince drove with the Emperor and Empress to the Bois de Boulogne, which had recently been transformed by the Emperor into the beautiful park which it now is. 'Albert is quite astonished at it, and says the improvements which have been made in it are wonderful. In the course of the drive, hearing me express a wish to know where Neuilly was, both the Emperor and Empress very amiably proposed to take us there. Accordingly they did so, going by several pretty country houses, through the very small dirty village of Neuilly into the gates, where two pavilions remain all in ruins, with broken windows, grass growing in the walks, altogether a most melancholy picture of decay. Albert remembered it all so well. We returned by the banks of the Seine, which are very pretty, and remind one of Richmond. . . . A great many people cheering everywhere. . . .

'A large dinner-party. General Canrobert, only just returned from the trenches—"*j'étais dans les tranchées*," he said, "*il y a quinze jours*"—was the principal addition. He sat next to me. I was delighted with him, such an honest, good man, so sincere and friendly, and so fond of the English, very enthusiastic, talking with much gesticulation. He is short, and wears his hair, which is black, rather long behind, has a red face and rolling eyes, moustaches, and no whiskers, and carries his head rather high. He praised our troops immensely, spoke of the great difficulty of the undertaking, the sufferings we had all undergone, the mistakes which had been made, and most kindly of our generals and troops. I said I looked upon him as an old acquaintance, from having heard so much of him. He said, "*Je suis presque un sujet de votre Majesté*," from being a member of the Fishmongers' Company. Speaking of poor Lord Raglan he said, "*C'était un noble gentleman, que nous avons beaucoup regretté*," and of the 18th of June, "*Cela a tué le pauvre milord.*"'

Her Majesty might truly speak of General Canrobert as an old acquaintance, for, like the Prince, not a detail of the war escaped her notice. Every despatch from the camp, every weekly return made upon the model suggested by the Prince which reached the Government, were read by them both, and copies carefully preserved. Plans showing every addition to the trenches were sent regularly for Her Majesty's use, so that the exact position of affairs before Sebastopol was as well known in Her Majesty's working room, as it was at the head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief. General Canrobert was, no doubt, surprised at the minute accuracy of Her Majesty's information. He told Lord Clarendon 'that he had talked to many people, military and civil, but to none so thoroughly well informed about the Crimea, the siege, and the armies, as Her Majesty.'[3]

'*Monday, 20th August.*—A lovely morning, pleasant air, with a bright sun, and the delicious fountains playing. Further satisfactory accounts from the Crimea. . . . The Emperor came to fetch us to breakfast as before. The coffee quite excellent, and all the cookery very plain and very good. For breakfast and luncheon we have a small round table, as at home. . . . The servants very quiet and attentive. At a quarter before ten we started for Paris with all our suite. The Emperor has pretty barouches, rather smaller than ours, and bay horses harnessed just like ours; the livery dark green, black and gold, with red and gold waistcoats.'

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[3] Our authority for this statement is a letter of Lord Clarendon's, dated 31st August, 1855.

The first place visited was the *Exposition des Beaux Arts*, which adjoined the *Palais d'Industrie* in the Champs Elysées. The unexampled collection of paintings illustrative of all the modern schools, which must always be remembered with vivid delight by all who had the privilege of seeing it, was gone through. 'The enthusiasm was very great, both at the Exposition, and in the densely crowded streets, and the cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" "*Vive la Reine d'Angleterre!*" were very constant and gratifying. I was of course always at the Emperor's arm.'

From the Exposition the Royal party went to the *Elysée*, where, after luncheon, the whole *corps diplomatique*, with their wives, were presented to the Queen, the Emperor meanwhile himself driving the Prince of Wales in a curricle through Paris, 'not the least interesting incident,' the Queen writes, 'in this most eventful, interesting, and delightful visit.' Later in the day, the Emperor accompanied his guests in an open carriage to the Sainte Chapelle, and to the Palais de Justice, which gave Her Majesty an opportunity of seeing by the way some of the most striking features of the city. 'In crossing the *Pont au Change*, you see the *Conciergerie*, and the Emperor, pointing to it, said, "*Voilà où j'étais en prison!*" Strange contrast to be driving with us as Emperor through the streets of the city in triumph!'

Notre Dame and the Hôtel de Ville were next visited, and after making the circuit of the Boulevards, and traversing the Champs Elysées, and the Bois de Boulogne, St. Cloud was reached about six o'clock. 'No one,' says the Queen, after recording the proceedings of the day, 'can be kinder or more agreeable than is the Emperor, and so quiet, which is a comfort on all, but particularly on such occasions.'

'The view from our rooms and balcony, of Paris, lit up by the evening light, with the *Arc de Triomphe* rising conspicuously in the distance, had a marvellous effect. I sat drawing on the balcony, and took a little sketch of the very pretty avenue which leads down into the town. Found afterwards Canrobert with Albert, who told us much that was very interesting, in fact quite touching, about his own position, and his feeling towards Lord Raglan. I gave him the Order of the Bath, and with real pleasure.'

In the evening there was a theatrical performance in the Palace of the *Demoiselles de St. Cyr*, with Regnier and Mdlle. Brohan in the principal parts, 'the *ensemble* perfect.' 'After the play,' says our record, 'we returned to the rooms upstairs, and stopped in the *Salle de Mars*, where everybody passed by, the Empress presenting each in passing. We afterwards went for a moment into the *Salle de Diane*, where the refreshments were, and thence to our rooms, to which the Emperor and Empress, preceded by their gentlemen, always take us. The night was delightfully warm, and we stepped out on the balcony to watch the carriages going away.

'*Tuesday*, 21*st August*.—At half-past ten we started for Versailles in many carriages, *en poste*. We passed by Ville d'Avray, a pretty village, with many villas about it. It was decorated with wreaths, &c., the people out everywhere and very friendly. At nearly every village there were troops, or National Guards, and always some *gendarmes* in their handsome dress. We reached Versailles in rather more than half an hour.' After visiting the vast series of galleries and apartments, 'which brought to mind so much of the history of France, with its many strange and dark events. . . . we drove about the curious old-fashioned gardens, to see the waterworks, which are wonderful and endless. The effect of the innumerable *jets-d'eau*, with the bright sunshine, the bands (of which there were four) playing, the multitude of people, and the numerous equipages going in and out of the small avenues, and winding along the *bassins*, was very fine.

'From here we drove to the *Grand Trianon*, and the small palace, with rooms on the ground-floor where Marie Antoinette used to live, and from the windows of which the view is beautiful. The Emperor showed me the room and bed (it had belonged to Napoleon) which had been prepared for us by poor Louis Philippe, when he expected us to visit Paris, and the sedan-chair of Madame de Maintenon, by the side of which, according to St. Simon, Louis XIV. used so often to walk; also the pretty little chapel (excessively small) where poor Marie [Louis Philippe's daughter] was married to Alexander of Würtemberg in 1838.'

The *Petit Trianon* was next visited, and all its associations with Marie Antoinette were recalled. Here the Empress joined the party for luncheon in one of the largest of the many cottages. 'Everywhere everything is ready; rooms prepared for us, and all just as if one were living there. The furniture (which I believe comes from the Garde Meuble) was frequently of that period of the Empire *qui a un cachet tout particulier*, and of which Mama had much at Kensington, so that I recognised in many places old acquaintances in bureaux, mirrors, tables, presses, &c., also counterparts to things which we have at Windsor, in china, and in furniture of the time of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. . . . After luncheon we sat for some time under the trees listening to the fine band of the *Guides*, and I made some sketches. The sun shining through the trees on the band, the ladies and gentlemen, the escort (Carabiniers of the Guard) and the postilions and horses, with the music, and the occasional tinkling of the bells of the horses of the *chaises de poste*, made the prettiest effect possible. At a little after three we started again for St. Cloud, I driving in a phaeton with the Empress. . . . There were crowds all along the road; the sun was intensely hot, and there was a great deal of dust. . . . The view of Paris from our windows this evening was again beautiful. The air is so light and clear, and so free from our baneful coal smoke, that objects, even at the greatest distance, are seen quite distinctly.'

After dining quietly alone with the Emperor, hosts and guests started at a quarter to seven for Paris on a state visit to the Grand Opera in the Rue Lepelletier. 'Paris was brilliantly illuminated, and with the greatest taste. Under one of the triumphal arches was a lustre of lamps, which was extremely handsome. The streets were full of people cheering. The *Garde de Paris* lined the staircase of the Opera House, and at the top of the staircase in the vestibule were my favourite *Cent-Gardes*. The box was arranged in the centre of the House just as when we go to the Opera in state, two *Cent-Gardes* standing where the yeomen stand, on either side of the box, and two upon the stage. The theatre is handsome, and was full of people, and the reception very hearty. The performance consisted of selections of airs, duets, &c., from different operas, sung in costume, pronounced to be "not a very happy arrangement," and a long, too long ballet, in three acts, with Rosati as the principal dancer. The scene then changed, and a view of Windsor, with the Emperor's arrival there, appeared, and "God save the Queen" was sung splendidly, and most enthusiastically cheered; there could not have been more enthusiasm in England. We returned home at half-past twelve. . . . The Emperor was very cheerful, and repeated with Albert all sorts of old German songs, and Albert repeated some to him. He is very fond of Germany, and his old recollections of it, and there is much that is German, and very little—in fact, nothing—markedly French in his character.'

'*Wednesday, 22nd August.*—Another splendid day! Most truly do the heavens favour and smile upon this happy Alliance, for when the Emperor was in England in April the weather was beautiful. Despatches (telegraphic) from General Simpson, saying that they had begun a vertical fire, which was taking good effect. The Emperor is full of anxiety and regret about the campaign. Ten thousand shells have been thrown into the town within the last few days, and they are in want of more!'

The early part of the day was devoted to a visit to the *Exposition,* but only that part of it was examined which occupied the ground-floor. To accomplish so much, where the objects of interest were so diversified and so numerous, was a task involving no ordinary fatigue. 'England and the Colonies,' it is noted, 'make a very fine show, and our china pleases very much.' This, indeed, more than any other of our manufactures, marked the strides we had made since the French porcelain and faïence in the Great Exhibition of 1851 had shown us what could be done in this direction. In the application of the potter's art to domestic uses, we were admitted to have established a supremacy, which has not since been shaken. 'The Emperor,' continues our record, 'gave Albert a spendid vase of Sèvres manufacture, representing the Exhibition of 1851, which he said was particularly intended for Albert, as to him that Exhibition was due. Albert was much pleased, for it is a *chef-d'œuvre* in every sense of the word. There are numbers of beautiful things in the Exhibition of all kinds—many which I recognise from the London and Dublin Exhibitions.'

From the Exposition the Emperor drove with his guests to the Tuileries, now like St. Cloud charred and in ruins. 'The Emperor took us into his apartments—up a short flight of steps—which consist of a suite of rooms, six in number, opening one into the other . . . . In his bedroom are busts of his father and uncle, and an old glass case, which he had with him in England, containing relics of all sorts, that are peculiarly valuable to him. In some of the other rooms are portraits of Napoleon, Josephine, his own mother with his elder brother, and one of her with his brother and himself as little children. These were in the room, in which we lunched, which is used as a sitting-room. There is also here the cabinet on which Louis Philippe signed that fatal abdication. The Emperor took us up by a small private staircase to the Empress's rooms, and thence into a room where I received the Préfet and the Municipalité, who came to invite us to the ball at the Hôtel de Ville, and wished to read an address, which the Emperor stopped. I answered that I would go to the ball with pleasure, and that I had been deeply moved by the reception which I had met with in France, which I should never forget. The Préfet then asked whether they might call the new street leading to the Hôtel de Ville after me, on which I said—"*Je serai bien flattée de cela*—" then turning towards the Emperor, "*si l'Empereur le permet*," on which he cordially gave his consent. I then observed upon the beauty of the city, and all that the Emperor had done for it.' Some hours were spent in examining the splendid state rooms of the Palace. Then after a visit to the British Embassy, the Queen and Prince went to the Elysée, from which they started on a drive through Paris *incognito*, 'with considerable tribulation. The Emperor was much amused at our project, and directed where we were to go. We got into a *remise;* I and Miss Bulteel, having put on common bonnets, I with a black veil down, and a black mantilla. We sat together, while Albert, and Vicky, (who had also a bonnet and mantilla which we sent for in a hurry,) sat backwards. In going through the gates, the curious crowd looked very hard into the carriage, which stopped for a moment, and we felt very foolish. However, we got away, and by help of my veil I was able to look out, and we took a charming long drive by the Rue de Rivoli, Rue de Castiglione, Place Vendôme, Rue de la Paix, all along the Boulevards des Capucines, des Italiens, Montmartre, Poissonnière, Bonne-Nouvelle, St. Denis, St. Martin, du Temple, des Filles-du-Calvaire and Beaumarchais, then by the Place de la Bastille (where stands the Colonne de Juillet), the Boulevard Bourdon, Place Mazas, over the Pont d'Austerlitz, where we had a beautiful view up and down the river, and along the Quais, everything there looking so light, and white, and bright, with great numbers of people and soldiers in bright colours, *marchands de coco*, &c., people sitting and drinking before the houses, all so foreign and southern-looking to my eyes, and so gay. We then drove along the Place Walhubert, to the Jardin des Plantes, then by the Marché-aux-Fleurs (very pretty along the Quai), Halle-aux-Vins (a number of curious little houses in a sort of garden), Quai de la Tournelle, Quai Montebello, Quai St. Michel, then across the Pont au Change, opposite the old Tower of St. Jacques, and by the Quai de la Mégisserie, Quai de l'Ecole, Quai du Louvre, back to the Tuileries safely, and without being known, at twenty minutes to six. We found the Emperor in the drawing-room below stairs. We changed our bonnets, and immediately re-entered the open carriages to return to St. Cloud, where we arrived at near seven.'

A great dinner of eighty covers took place the same evening. 'At dinner the Emperor came to speak of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and of the strange part he had acted at Vienna, of his having been at first entirely for the war and the alliance, and then afterwards not so—but having even insinuated, that France had not disliked to see Louis Philippe fall, on account of his alliance with England. "*Je lui ai répondu*," the Emperor continued, "*Louis Philippe n'est pas tombé à cause de son alliance avec l'Angleterre, mais parce qu'il n'était pas sincère avec l'Angleterre.*" I replied, that I could not sufficiently express our appreciation of his great *franchise;* that, if there was anything to complain of, or which he felt annoyed at, he should only speak out, and tell it to us, for that by doing so all misunderstandings and complications would be avoided. He said he only cared "*pour les grandes choses;*"—that he would not allow at the different courts a French party to be kept up against the English; but that he had great difficulty in getting this old and bad habit broken through; that with the war he had had great difficulty in making people in France understand, that it was prosecuted for the interest of France, and not to please England. He was, therefore, peculiarly pleased and gratified at the demonstrations of enthusiasm and joy amongst all classes on our arrival, as he could not have made them show this.'

A performance, in the theatre of the Palace, of the little play of '*Un Fils de Famille*,' with Bressant in the chief character, wound up this busy day.

'*Thursday*, 23*rd August.*— . . . . Albert left directly after breakfast for Paris to see the Exposition. I walked a little about the garden close to the house, with Vicky alone, and saw the Emperor walking up one of the nearest avenues with Lord Clarendon. We walked down the other side of the house not far from the gate, where the Zouaves were doing duty, and I sketched them at a distance: their dress is charming.' Early in the afternoon a visit was paid to the Louvre, and a flying glance taken at its multifarious treasures of art. Three hours and a half were all that could be spared for what it was felt might well have occupied many hours of every day for many weeks. To add to the fatigue, the heat was tropical, and at the doors of the Sculpture Gallery, as many a visitor there in summer has had occasion to notice, 'the heat rushed in as from a furnace.' With the prospect of the ball at the Hôtel de Ville the same evening, the Queen was compelled to put a restraint on her wish to see more of the treasures of art everywhere around her.

'We got back to our rooms at seven. Rested a little. The band of the *Guides* was playing in the garden; and I afterwards sat writing in the Empress's little sitting-room. The band made me feel *wehmüthig* and melancholy. All so gay, the people cheering the Emperor as he walked up and down in the little garden; and yet how recently has blood flowed, a whole dynasty been swept away, and how uncertain is everything still! All is so beautiful here, all seems now so prosperous, the Emperor seems so fit for his place, and yet how little security one feels for the future! These reflections crowded on my mind, full as it was of joy and gratitude for all I saw, for all the kindness I had received!

'We had a nice quite *vertrauliches* (cosy) little dinner with the Emperor. (The children went home to St. Cloud at seven, and were to go a little to the Empress in the evening.) We talked most cheerfully together, and he was in high spirits. We laughed much at a fine old-fashioned Imperial cafetière, which would not let out the coffee in spite of all the attempts of the page to make it do so. We stood,—and I thought at the time how very extraordinary it was, and how much had happened in these very Tuileries,—with the Emperor, all three looking out of the window, which opened on the garden, the sound of music, of carriages, and people being heard in the distance, talking of past times. The Emperor said he knew Madame Campan, who had been one of the dressers of Marie Antoinette, and had brought up his mother, and though he could not recollect what she had related in person, he had studied her Memoirs. In these, he said, she told how the poor Queen, having been summoned to appear [before the National Assembly], had to walk through Paris on foot, that she had herself lived in constant dread of what would happen, and what a hair-breadth escape she had had, when the mob ascended the stairs, killed the Heyduc in attendance, who was in bed, and were advancing to her, when one of them called out *Respect aux femmes!* to which the ruffian, who was about to kill her, replied *Heim!* and put up his sword. The Emperor added, that Madame Campan said she never could forget this *Heim*, and still heard it in her ears, for with it was linked the saving of her life.'[4]

The streets between the Tuileries were brilliantly illuminated. The building itself was a blaze of light, and the whole arrangements for the ball on a scale of the utmost splendour, yet 'all in the very best taste.'

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[4] It may be interesting to compare the Emperor's recollections with Madame Campan's narrative:—

The King and his family had gone to the Assemblée Nationale. '*Nous*' (who remained in the Tuileries) '*vîmes défiler la famille royale entre deux haies formées par les grenadiers Suisses et ceux des bataillons des Petits-Pères et des Filles Saint-Thomas. Ils étaient si pressés par la foule que, pendant ce court trajet, la reine fut volée de sa montre et de sa bourse. . . . Je laisse à l'histoire tous les détails de cette journée, trop mémorable, me bornant à retracer quelques-unes des scènes affreuses de l'intérieur du palais des Tuileries, après que le roi l'eut quitté.*' She then describes the rush of the mob, the attack on the Swiss guards, and the massacres that took place. '*Nous allions toutes périr, quand un homme à longue barbe arriva en criant de la part de Pétion, "Faites grâce aux femmes: ne déshonorez pas la nation."*' She went to look for her sister, and reached a room where the mob, rushing in, killed the 'Heiduque' in attendance in the Queen's apartments. '*Les assassins quittent l'Heiduque pour venir à moi. Le peu de largeur de l'escalier gênait les assassins: mais j'avais déjà senti une main terrible s'enfoncer dans mon dos, pour me saisir par mes vêtemens, lorsqu'on cria du bas de l'escalier: "Que faites-vous là-haut?" L'horrible Marseillais, qui allait me massacrer, répondit un* HEIM, *dont le son ne sortira jamais de ma mémoire. L'autre voix répondit ces seuls mots: "On ne tue pas les femmes." J'étais à genoux, mon bourreau me lâcha et me dit, "Lève-toi, coquine, la nation te fait grâce."*'—*Mémoires de la Vie de Marie Antoinette.* London, 1823. Vol. ii. p. 237.

'The entrance,' Her Majesty writes, 'decorated with flags and flowers, and emblems, with fountains under the staircase, and two statues representing England and France, was most beautiful, and, as the Emperor observed to me, "*faisait l'effet des Mille et une Nuits*." . . . We went into a very fine long *salon*, where there was a *haut-pas* with chairs. The Empress and I sat in the middle, the Emperor to my right, Albert to my left, with Prince Napoleon next to him, and Princesse Mathilde next the Emperor. One quadrille of only four couple was danced, the Emperor and I, with Albert and Princesse Mathilde, opposite Prince Napoleon and Madame Haussmann, Prince Adalbert and Lady Cowley. After this, one *valse* was danced. Some Arabs from Algeria, fine-looking and very picturesque men, in long white burnouses, came and kissed the Emperor's hand. Several kissed my hand. One in particular (a Cadi, a chieftain, and a priest), all in white from head to foot, was very handsome and imposing.' The tour of the magnificent rooms, all doomed to be 'charred and levelled with the common dust' by the fury of the Commune in 1871, was then made. 'We stopped for two or three minutes in the *Salle du Trône*, where Robespierre was wounded, Louis Philippe proclaimed, and from the windows of which Lamartine spoke for so many hours in 1848! The Emperor said: "*Cette occasion effacera les tristes souvenirs*."' On entering the carriage to leave, the Prince insisted on the Emperor sitting next to the Queen, which he had refused to do in going. 'However, that was the last time, for, ever after, when the Empress and Vicky were not there, he always made Albert sit forward. We went to the Tuileries. I took off my diadem,' in which was the Koh-i-noor, 'which Lady Ely carried back. We changed carriages and were at St. Cloud by half-past twelve.'

Friday, 24th August.—Another visit was paid to the

Exposition, where the Prince devoted himself to the Agricultural section, while the Queen went through the galleries which had not been visited on the previous visit. A great review of the troops in the *Champ de Mars* was appointed for the afternoon. 'At half-past four,' Her Majesty writes, 'we got into the carriages [at the Tuileries]. The Empress and the two children—Bertie in his full Highland dress—were in the carriage with me. The Emperor, Albert, Prince Adalbert, Prince Napoleon, and a most brilliant suite, were all on horseback. The Emperor rode on my side, and Albert on the Empress's. There were immense and most enthusiastic crowds. We proceeded by that beautiful *Place de la Concorde*, over the *Pont de Jéna* to the *Champ de Mars*. The *coup-d'œil* there was truly magnificent—from 30,000 to 40,000 men, several rows deep, each regiment with its good, powerful band, and their fine commanding *tambour-majors*, their stalwart bearded *sapeurs* (those of the *Voltigeurs de la garde* have yellow *tabliers*), and the very picturesque and smartly dressed *cantinières*, all cheering, and the bands playing "God save the Queen!" The *cortége* had become immense as we drove down the lines (only in the middle, as it would have taken too much time otherwise), having been increased by the *Maréchaux-Généraux* (Canrobert included), and the picturesque Arabs. We first passed down the infantry, then the cavalry, which are beautiful, and then the artillery. This over, we drove into the *Ecole Militaire*, the Emperor alone dismounting, and handing me upstairs to the large balcony, in front of which the Emperor, Albert, and the rest, took their station. There we found Princess Mathilde, and sat down. Then the troops began to *défiler* in quick time, which took three quarters of an hour; a beautiful spectacle, such fine troops! . . . . The clothes of all the men are infinitely better made and cut than those of our soldiers, which provokes me much. The drums, too—

brass ones—are much finer. It was a magnificent sight. Albert regretted, and so did I, that I was not on horseback. This over (it had been dropping rain all the time), I took leave of the Empress. The Emperor came to fetch me, and I told him how delighted I had been to see these splendid troops, "*qui étaient les camarades de ces braves troupes qui se battaient avec les miennes*," and that I had a real affection for them. The Emperor replied he hoped that this happy unity would ever continue, and that I should be able to look at them as if they were my own. . . .

'We drove straight to the *Hôtel des Invalides*, under the dome of which Napoleon lies, late as it was, because we were most anxious not to miss this, perhaps the most important, act of all in this very interesting and eventful time. It was nearly seven when we arrived. All the Invalides,—chiefly of the former, but some of the present, war,—were drawn up on either side of the court into which we drove. It seems we had not been expected, there having been some mistake on account of the change of hour for the review, which was to have been in the morning, but, in consequence of the fearful heat, had been put off by the Emperor to five o'clock. . . . The Governor, Count d'Ornano, was terribly put out at not having been *prévenu*. However, it all did very well. There were four torches which lit us along, and added to the solemnity of the scene, which was striking in every way. The Church is fine and lofty. We went to look from above into the open vault, the effect of which the Emperor does not like, as he says it looks like "*un grand bassin*." "*On arrive*," he said, "*et on se demande qui est dans le tombeau de l'Empereur ; on s'attend à voir de l'eau ici*." The work and interior designs are, however, very fine. The coffin is not yet there, but in a small side chapel de St. Jérome. Into this the Emperor led me, and there I stood, at the arm of Napoleon III., his nephew, before the coffin of England's bitterest foe; I, the granddaughter of that King who hated him most, and who most vigorously opposed him, and this very nephew, who bears his name, being my nearest and dearest ally! The organ of the Church was playing "God save the Queen" at the time, and this solemn scene took place by torchlight, and during a thunder-storm. Strange and wonderful indeed. It seems, as if in this tribute of respect to a departed and dead foe, old enmities and rivalries were wiped out, and the seal of Heaven placed upon that bond of unity, which is now happily established between two great and powerful nations. May Heaven bless and prosper it!

'The coffin is covered with black velvet and gold, and Napoleon's orders, hat, and sword, are placed at its foot. The Emperor does not intend to bury him here, but to take him to St. Denis, where all the French Kings are buried, his great wish being to legalise the family as a dynasty in France. He will leave the heart here. We went down into the vault for a moment, but it was very cold. We then left and returned to the Tuileries by half-past seven. . . .

'We had our nice *vertrauliches* little dinner with the Emperor (the children had again gone home), and we talked a great deal about the war. Some despatches, up to the 14th, had arrived, and Albert showed the Emperor "the Morning State,"[5] and spoke of the reports which we had received. The servants being still in the room, the Emperor began to talk in English. He lamented bitterly the want of invention and energy in both our commanders from the first, and the absence of any great genius. He then spoke very openly and frankly of the defects of *our* generals; and *we* told him equally frankly what was objected to *his*; and nothing could be more satisfactory than the conversation, or more straightforward or honest than the Emperor's observations and propositions. It was just as if we had one and the same army; and so, in fact, it is, but it is very pleasant to find this so in another sovereign.

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[5] The tabulated Return, showing from day to day the exact number and description of forces before Sebastopol under the command of General Simpson, and also of the siege and field guns. These returns were regularly filed by the Prince.

'It was pretty to hear the *retraite*, which sent the people (long after dark) out of the Gardens of the Tuileries. At half-past nine we went to the *Opéra Comique*, not in state, though we were recognised. We were in the Emperor's private box, which is on the stage. . . . It was Auber's pretty opera of "Haidée," very nicely sung. The first act was over when we arrived. After the opera, before the curtain dropped, "God save the Queen" was sung; I was obliged to show myself, and was loudly cheered. We reached St. Cloud by half-past twelve. The Emperor talked much of the war in the carriage. He had received despatches. It had rained heavily.

'*Saturday, 25th August.*—The air cooled and refreshed by the rain in the night.' At half-past eleven the Emperor started with his guests for the forest of St. Germain. 'We arrived about half-past one at *La Muette*, a small *rendez-vous de chasse*, with a few rooms in it, which were again all ready and prepared for us.

'Maréchal Magnan (*grand veneur*), Comte Edgar Ney, M. de Toulongeon, &c., all in the huntsman's dress, dark green velvet with red waistcoats, high boots, and cocked hats, received us. Many people from the neighbourhood were assembled there, including good old Lablache, who was called up for us to speak to, and who cried when the Emperor shook hands with him, and said, "*La Reine m'a recommandé votre fils.*" The dogs were then brought up with the huntsmen, who played a *fanfare* on their horns. Some young girls dressed all in white, with green wreaths, then asked permission to present me with a nosegay and some fruit. They came, accompanied by the *curé.* One, a very young girl, began a long speech, bringing in our visit, the Alliance, the Exposition, &c. Suddenly she stopped, exclaiming, "*Ah, mon Dieu!*" The Emperor and I proposed to relieve her by taking the nosegay from her and thanking her, but she would not give it up, and said, "*Attendez! je vais me rappeler!*" which nearly set us off. But she persevered, and *did* recollect it for some sentences, when she broke down a second time. Then the *curé*, who had evidently composed the speech, burst forth with the finale of "*Vive la Reine d'Angleterre!*" which set the girl right again, and she continued: "*Vive la Reine d'Angleterre, vive sa Demoiselle, vive son Prince Albert, vive l'Empereur, vive l'Impératrice, vive tout le monde!*" We laughed much afterwards at this little episode, for the effect was most comical, and yet the poor girl was much to be commended and admired for her courage and perseverance; she looked so frightened. . . .'

After luncheon, *à propos* of which the Queen notes that the Imperial *cuisine* 'generally is simple and good, but with less variety than ours,'—and talking together for some little time, 'we went into the front room or hall, where we sat down, and I sketched a little, and listened to the music, which was very pretty. The Emperor was very gay, and danced with the children. We left about half-past three; and drove to the old Palace of St. Germain,' where the rooms occupied by Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and those in which James II. lived after his dethronement, were particularly examined. On the way back to St. Cloud, a visit was paid to Malmaison, where the Emperor in his childhood had seen the Empress Josephine, and to the fortress of Mont Valérien.

There was to be a state ball at Versailles the same evening. The Royal party, with the exception of the Empress, who had preceded them, so as to rest and dress at Versailles, started at a quarter-past nine: 'the *piqueurs* carrying torches, which I had not seen since I was in Germany. It rained twice while we were on the way, which alarmed us, but entirely cleared before we reached Versailles, the moon shining beautifully. The Palace looked magnificent. It was illuminated throughout with lamps, which had a charming effect. The staircase, finely lighted up and carpeted, looked not like the same staircase we had seen a few days before. The Empress met us at the top of the staircase, looking like a fairy queen or nymph, in a white dress, trimmed with branches of grass and diamonds,—a beautiful *tour de corsage* of diamonds round the top of her dress, and all *en rivière*, the same round her waist, and a corresponding coiffure, with her Spanish and Portuguese orders. The Emperor said when she appeared: "*Comme tu es belle!*" . . . We went through the *Galerie des Glaces*, which was full of people, and one blaze of light from countless lustres. Wreaths of flowers hung from the ceiling.

'We went to the window to look at the illuminations all along the grillage of yellow and green lamps, with our four initials at intervals, which were charmingly reflected in the water. The general effect was splendid. We next went into another room, from the balcony of which we witnessed the fireworks. These were magnificent—rockets, and bouquets of *girandoles*,—such as I have never seen, they rose so high, and the balls and lights thrown were so variegated in colours. Guns were fired the whole time, and unfortunately the smoke was driven by the wind too low, which slightly obscured the fireworks at the end, to the great distress of the Empress, by whom the fireworks, as well as the rest of the fête, had been designed. The Emperor had, I believe, ordered the guns, as he thought (and in that he was right), that something of this sort is always required to keep up the excitement. The finale was a representation in fireworks of Windsor Castle,—

a very pretty attention. We then returned to the ball and the dancing began.'

The Empress did not dance.[6] The Queen danced two quadrilles, the first with the Emperor, the second with Prince Napoleon. In these Prince Albert joined, dancing first with the Princess Mathilde, and afterwards with the Princess of Augustenburg. Several of the guests were then presented to Her Majesty, among others, one who was afterwards to visit the halls of the palace of Versailles under very different circumstances,—Count Bismarck, then Prussian Minister at Frankfort. He is described as 'very Russian and *Kreuzzeitung*,' and as having said, in answer to the Queen's observation, 'how beautiful Paris was,'—'*Sogar schöner als Petersburg*' (*even more beautiful than Petersburg*). Dancing was then resumed, the Queen waltzing with the Emperor, 'who waltzes very quietly' . . . . 'This over, we waited in the celebrated *œil-de-bœuf*, where Louis XIV.'s courtiers waited for him *pour être au lever*, and which the ball-room opens into. It was beautifully furnished for the occasion with Beauvais tapestry.

'We waited till all the company had gone in to supper, and then began our procession, the guards, officers, &c., walking before us. We walked through a number of fine rooms and a long gallery to the theatre, where the supper was. The sight it presented was truly magnificent. The whole stage was covered in, and four hundred people sat down to supper at forty small tables of ten each, each presided over by a lady, and nicely selected,—all by the Empress's own desire and arrangement. There were many garlands of flowers, and the whole was beautifully lit up with innumerable chandeliers. The boxes were full of spectators, and a band was playing, but not visible. We sat at a small table in the centre box, with only the Emperor and Empress, the two children, Prince Napoleon, Princess Mathilde, and Prince Adalbert. It was one of the finest and most magnificent sights we had ever witnessed; there had not been a ball at Versailles since the time of Louis XVI., and the present one had been arranged after a print of a fête given by Louis XV. The supper over, we returned to the *Salle des Glaces*, where there was one more waltz, which the Emperor danced with Vicky. . . .

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[6] The Empress was at this time *enceinte*, and in very delicate health.

'It was near two when we left. . . . The Emperor, as he led me away, said, "*C'est terrible, que ce soit l'avant-dernier soir!*" which I was equally sorry for. I observed, I hoped he would come to England again, to which he replied, "Most certainly. *Mais, n'est-ce pas, vous reviendrez? Comme nous nous connaissons maintenant, nous pouvons aller nous voir à Windsor et à Fontainebleau sans grande cérémonie, n'est-ce pas?*" I replied, that this would give me great pleasure, which it certainly would. . . . It was past two when we got home, much delighted, and the children in ecstasies, and past three before we got to bed.'

Sunday, 26th August.—This was Prince Albert's birthday. It is thus the entries for the day begin.

'This dearest of days was not ushered in as usual, nor spent at home as I could have wished; but my dear Albert was pleased, and it was spent with those who truly appreciate him. May God ever bless and protect him for many, many years to come, and may we ever be together to our lives' end!

'The morning was beautiful, and, when I was dressed, Albert came in. I gave him at a table surrounded by a wreath a very fine bronze of the celebrated Belgian group, "*Le Lion Amoureux*," and some pretty Alliance and Crimean studs, the third button having a blank, I hope for Sebastopol. The Emperor joined us and we breakfasted. Immediately after breakfast the Emperor said, that he had some music of his own composition in honour of Albert's birthday. He took us to the balcony of Albert's dressing-room, which overlooks the courtyard, where were assembled 300 drummers, with their several tambour-majors. Upon our appearing the Emperor gave them the signal, "*Commencez!*" on which they all, as if they were one man, began a splendid roll of drums in a particular manner, which is only given upon the *jour de l'an*. They repeated this twice, and then went away cheering. It was very fine, and very kind of the Emperor. He is particularly fond of it.'

In the course of this morning, while the Emperor drove the Queen through the Park of St. Cloud in his own phaeton, a very interesting conversation took place. 'I said to the Emperor that as he was always so very frank in all he said to me, and wished that I should be the same, I was very anxious to tell him something, "*que j'avais bien à cœur, qu'il comprît*," and this was, that he should understand on what footing I was with the Orleans family;—that they were my friends and relations, and that I could not drop them in their adversity, but that they were very discreet, and politics were not touched upon between us. The Emperor replied, that he quite understood this, and felt that I could not abandon those who were in misfortune. I rejoined, that I felt certain this was the Emperor's feeling; but that other people tried, and Walewski was one, to put a great stress on my communications with the family, and to make me understand that the Emperor would be very much displeased. He replied, "that was just like Walewski. . . . *Comme nous sommes une fois sur ce sujet*," he continued, he wished to explain the motives which led him to confiscate the property of the Orleans family, an action which had been much attacked. He had no animosity to the family. He had wished to leave all the Orleanist *employés* in their places, to dismiss no one, and to receive every one, but that he had discovered that their agents, encouraged by themselves (though, on my observation, that I was sure they would not conspire, he admitted that), were attempting to upset his authority, and that *then* he felt he could not leave them with such large possessions, which they would have the power to use against the government. He had therefore pursued the course, that had been pursued before, of obliging them to sell their property within six months. But he repeated that he had "*aucune animosité*," and he hoped, I had told the Queen that it would give him pleasure, if she passed through France on her way to Spain. I could not make much further remark, beyond saying that they had felt the confiscation very much, and that they were in consequence much more bitter than they would otherwise have been, at least, they had been at the time, for now the subject was never mentioned between us. I praised the Princes, and the Queen, their discretion, &c. The Emperor said, in conclusion of his explanation about the confiscation, that their agents were in constant communication with his enemies, even "*avec ceux qui prêchent l'assassinat.*" I said, I could hardly credit this. They were, I was sure, incapable of such conduct. I, however, added, that naturally all exiles were inclined to conspire, which he did not deny, and which indeed he had practised himself. . . .

'A curious conversation, but which I was greatly relieved to have had, for with my feelings of sincerity, I could not bear that there should be anything between us, now that the Alliance is so firmly and intimately established, and still more since we personally are on so intimate and friendly a footing. I was very anxious to get out what I had to say on the subject, and not to have this untouchable ground between us. Stockmar, so far back as last winter, suggested and advised, that this course should be pursued. During this conversation the Emperor again proposed—he had done so last Sunday—to take us to see the Chapelle de St. Ferdinand, built on the spot where the poor Duke of Orleans died.'

English service was read at noon. After this 'both the Emperor and Empress most kindly gave Albert presents, the former a picture by Meissonier, the finest thing in the Exhibition. . . . The Emperor kept constantly asking me, through Lady Ely, what Albert would like to have; and when I said at last, I know how much Albert admired this picture, the Emperor instantly sent for it, and gave it to him. So very kind. The Empress gave him a beautiful *Pokal*[7] carved in ivory, and handsomely mounted. The presents were placed in the luncheon room. . . .'

In the afternoon the visit to the Chapelle de St. Ferdinand was paid by the Queen and Prince in company with their Imperial hosts. As they came out of this chapel, of which some of the most beautiful features are by Baron Triqueti, who lived to design the art decorations of the Memorial Chapel to the Prince at Windsor, a woman from the opposite house, where the Curé who attended us lives, brought two medals in a box, which the Emperor took from her, paying for them himself, and giving them to me *comme souvenir*. They contained the heads of poor Chartres [the late Duke of Orleans] and Paris, with some lines in allusion to the latter being the hope of France, and with a representation of the chapel on the back. Strange that the Emperor should have bought them!'

A dinner party, followed by a concert of classical music, 'which Albert was much pleased with, but which bored the Emperor,' wound up the evening.

'*Monday, 27th August, St. Cloud.* . . . . I must write today, and here in my lovely dressing room, in this beautiful St. Cloud, with the cool sound of the fountains in my ear, a few parting words. I am deeply grateful for these eight very happy days, and for the delight of seeing such beautiful and interesting places and objects, and for the reception which we have met with in Paris, and in France generally. The union of the two nations, and of the two Sovereigns, for there is a great friendship sprung up between us, is of the greatest importance! May God bless these two countries, and may He specially protect the precious life of the Emperor, and may this happy union ever continue for the benefit of the world!

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[7] This cup is now at Balmoral.

'A beautiful morning, which made the dear place look only more lovely, and the departure even more sad. . . . At length at ten we were ready to go, and the Emperor came, saying the Empress was ready, but "*ne peut s'arracher*," and if I would come to her room, it would make her come. When we went in, the Emperor called to her, "*Eugénie, la Reine est là;*" and she came and gave me a beautiful fan, and a rose and heliotrope from the garden, and Vicky a beautiful bracelet, set with rubies and diamonds, containing her hair, with which Vicky was delighted. We started at half-past ten, the Emperor and Empress going with us. I was sorely grieved to leave this charming St. Cloud. The morning was more beautiful than ever, though intensely hot. The crowds great everywhere, beginning with the town of St. Cloud, where we generally (as also in other places) saw some poor wounded soldiers from the Crimea, including some of my favourites, the Zouaves. Along the whole route there were immense crowds, all most friendly. The *Arc de Triomphe*, under which we drove almost daily, had never been driven under before, except, I think, on one great occasion by the Emperor himself, and when the "*cendres de Napoléon*" passed through it.[8] All these things are striking and valuable, as indicating the altered feeling of the country.'

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[8] This Arch, which is generally associated exclusively with the name of the first Napoleon, was begun by him in 1806. On the 1st of April, 1810,

At the Tuileries adieu was said, amid no small emotion, to the Empress, and the Royal guests proceeded in state, accompanied by the Emperor and Prince Napoleon, to the Strasbourg Railway Station, where they were met by all the Ministers and Municipal authorities. The same cordial welcome which had greeted them in going to Paris awaited them at the various towns which they passed on their way back to Boulogne, which was reached at half-past five. After resting a short time at the *Hôtel du Pavillon*, which is close to the beach, facing the sea, 'we drove down at once,' Her Majesty writes, 'to the sands, where were assembled all the troops of the camp, 36,000 infantry, besides cavalry, lancers, and dragoons, and the gendarmerie. We drove down the lines, which were immensely deep, quite a forest of bayonets. The effect they produced, with the background of the calm blue sea, and the setting sun, which threw a glorious crimson light over all—for it was six o'clock—was most magnificent.'

Several of the officers and men were then decorated by the Emperor with the Cross of the Legion of Honour, after which came the usual march past. As to this it is observed: 'They walk much looser than our men, but they keep their time well and their appearance and step are very soldier-like. . . . Near the end of the march past our squadron saluted, and indeed it was one of the not least remarkable of the many striking events and contrasts with former times, which took place during this visit, that at this very place, on these very sands, Napoleon I. reviewed his army, which was to invade England, Nelson's fleet lying, where our squadron

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when the Empress Maria Louisa made her triumphal entry into Paris, she passed under a wooden structure reared above what had then been built of the Arch, and which represented what it was intended to be. The Arch was unfinished at the time of the fall of Napoleon, the scaffolding was removed, and for a time it seemed as if the work would not be proceeded with. However, Charles X. set to work to complete it, intending to use it as a memorial of the exploits of the Duc d'Angoulême in Spain. But the original design was resumed by Louis Philippe, and it was completed in 1836.

lay, watching that very army. Now our squadron saluted Napoleon III. while his army was filing past the Queen of England, several of the bands playing "Rule Britannia!" . . . . The sight of the troops as they filed off in their separate battalions of 800 each along the sea-shore, the setting sun gilding the thousands of bayonets, lances, &c., was indescribably beautiful.'

The Queen and Prince now drove to the camps of Honvault and Ambleteuse. By the time they had inspected these, 'the moon was rising, like a crimson ball, and giving a beautiful effect to the darkening sky and the dim twilight. I had a *cantinière* called up to the carriage, and looked at her dress and her little barrel. She was very tidy, clean, and well spoken. I wish we had them in our army. They must always be married, and if they wish to remain in the regiment, and their husbands die or are killed, they must marry again within the year.'

At length came the hour of parting. 'At eleven o'clock, after having dined, we got into the carriages. The streets and houses of the town were one blaze of illuminations and fireworks. There were salutes, bands playing, great cheering, and, to crown all, an exquisite moon, shining brilliantly over everything. It was a very fine and moving sight. The Emperor led me on board, followed by his whole suite, as he wished to go with us a little way out to sea. We glided out of the harbour, I with a heavy heart. . . .

'When out of the port, we took the Emperor, who was in perfect amazement at the size of the yacht, all over it below; he wishes to build one, smaller, for himself. I said he should build one the same size, to which he replied: "*Cela va pour la Reine des Mers, mais pas pour un terrestrien comme moi.*" When we came on deck, Colonel Fleury told the Emperor he must leave, or his small yacht, *l'Ariel*, could not re-enter the port.

'We thanked the Emperor much for all his kindness and for this delightful visit. He said: "*Vous reviendrez?*" and we hoped he would come to England; I embraced him twice, and he shook hands very warmly with Albert and the children. We followed him to the ladder, and here I once more squeezed his hand and embraced him, saying: "*Encore une fois, adieu, Sire!*" We looked over the side of the ship, and watched them getting into the barge. The Emperor called out: "*Adieu, Madame, au revoir:*" to which I replied: "*Je l'espère bien.*" We heard the splash of the oars, and saw the barge lit by the moon and numbers of blue lights, which we had on board the yacht, row up to the *Ariel*, and the Emperor and the rest go on board the yacht. Then we sent up endless rockets. We waited a little while for the *Fairy* to bring up the baggage, and watched the Imperial yacht which passed us, which our men cheered, while we waved our handkerchiefs, and then all was still, all over! It was past twelve when the Emperor left, and we stayed talking with Lord Clarendon till one.'

By half-past eight next morning the yacht cast anchor below Osborne, where Prince Alfred and his younger brothers were waiting upon the beach. 'Near the house were Lenchen and Louise, and in the house poor dear Alice, who was quite upset at seeing us.' The calm sweet home after the stir and splendour of the last ten days is brought vividly before us in these few simple words. The Queen sums up the account, of which we have only been able to borrow a comparatively small portion, with the following remarks:—

'Strange indeed are the dispensations and ways of Providence. Who ever could have thought that this same man, this Emperor, towards whom we certainly were not, since December 1851, well disposed, against whom so much was and could be said, whose life had been so chequered, could from outward circumstances, and his own sincere, straightforward conduct towards this country, and moderation and wisdom generally, become not only the staunchest *ally* and friend of England, but our personal friend!

'I have since talked frequently with Albert, who is naturally much calmer, and particularly much less taken by people, much less under *personal* influence, than I am. He quite admits that it is extraordinary, how very much attached one becomes to the Emperor, when one lives with him quite at one's ease and intimately, as we have done during the last ten days, for eight, ten, twelve, and, to-day, even fourteen hours a day. He is so quiet, so simple, *naïf* even, so pleased to be informed about things which he does not know, so gentle, so full of tact, dignity and modesty, so full of respect and kind attention towards us, never saying a word, or doing a thing, which could put me out or embarrass me. I know few people, whom I have felt involuntarily more inclined to confide in and speak unreservedly to—I should not fear saying anything to him. I felt—I do not know how to express it—safe with him. His society is particularly agreeable and pleasant; there is something fascinating, melancholy, and engaging, which draws you to him, in spite of any *prévention* you may have against him, and certainly without the assistance of any outward advantages of appearance, though I like his face. He undoubtedly has a most extraordinary power of attaching people to him! The children are very fond of him; to them also his kindness was very great, but at the same time most judicious. Then, he is so fond of Albert, appreciates him so thoroughly, and shows him so much confidence. In fine, I shall always look back on this visit to France, not only on account of the delightful and splendid things we saw and enjoyed, but on the time we passed with the Emperor, as one of the pleasantest and most interesting periods of my life! The Empress, too, has a great charm, and we are all very fond of her.'

CHAPTER LXVII.

While the feelings inspired by the incidents of the last ten days were still fresh and warm, both the Queen and Prince wrote to the Emperor of the French to express their gratitude for the personal kindness of the Empress and himself, and satisfaction at the prospect of a closer intimacy between France and England, to which the cordiality of their reception warranted them in looking forward.[1] A few words of the Emperor's reply to the Prince suffice to show the hold upon his regard which the Prince's high qualities had established. 'Need I say,' he writes, 'that the more I know you, the greater is my esteem for your character, and my friendship for your person? Of this you must be convinced, for we know by intuition those who love us. I regretted much the shortness of your stay, for where a desire to do good exists, the more people are together, the better do they understand each other.'

There were many letters to be written by the Prince immediately after the return to Osborne, in acknowledgment of the congratulations on his birthday, and to those who were looking eagerly for his report of the events of the last few days. Not the least interesting of these was the following to the King of the Belgians:—

'Osborne, 29th August, 1855.

'My dear Uncle,—We cannot be sufficiently thankful for the success which has attended our expedition to Paris.

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[1] These letters, with the Emperor's replies, will be found in the Appendix.

One day later, and we should not have been able to reach Boulogne, and during a heavy gale that lasted for three days hosts of vessels had to run for it to the Downs. In Paris we had the most glorious weather, no accident of any kind occurred, none of the festivities miscarried, no man's feelings were wounded (as on occasions of this kind, where so many personal vanities are brought into play, so generally happens), the public was inspired by a daily growing enthusiasm, and on good terms with us, and with itself, the troops were superb, the festivities fine and on a grand scale (*grossartig schön*), the Emperor and Empress cordial and friendly, our own suite thoroughly pleased, the children well-behaved, and at the same time highly delighted. In short, everything went off to a wish, which is always a great chance where what had to be done demanded such difficult combinations, as were required here. That the results of the visit will be most beneficial politically, I cannot for a moment doubt.

'Paris is signally beautified by the Rue de Rivoli, the Boulevard de Strasbourg, the completion of the Louvre, the great open square in front of the Hôtel de Ville, the clearing away of all the small houses which surrounded Notre Dame, by the fine Napoleon barracks, the completion of the Palais de Justice, and restoration of the Sainte Chapelle, and especially by the laying out of the ornamental grounds in the Bois de Boulogne, which really may be said to vie with the finest English parks. How all this could have been done in so short a time, no one comprehends. On the other hand, a painful impression was produced by Neuilly laid in ruins, with grass growing over them, and by the chapel of St. Ferdinand, with the beautiful monument to the Duke of Orleans. Both of these spots we visited with the Emperor. Strange! No less remarkable than that, after the great review, we went down in our uniforms, by torchlight (for it was now dark) with him and Prince Napoleon into the tomb of Napoleon, while the organ of the Church of the Invalides played "God save the Queen;" and that 40,000 men defiled before us upon the beach at Boulogne, the spot from which Napoleon was to start his invading army, and that whilst our fleet saluted us from the very anchorage which Nelson traversed for the purpose of preventing the invasion, many of the French regimental bands played "Rule Britannia!" in reply. So numerous were the strange impressions wrought by the contrast of past with present, that one could often only wonder. Thus we supped at Versailles in the theatre where the *gardes du corps* held their famous banquet, and even sat in the box in which Marie Antoinette showed herself to them; Victoria made her toilette in her boudoir, the ball-room was decorated after Louis XV.'s last ball, &c. &c.

'Little was said about politics, beyond the strongest assurances of persevering loyally in the war, until it shall be brought to a satisfactory close. The French are now within 60 yards of the Malakoff, and we within 120 of the Redan; the new Russian army was beaten in the field on the 16th, and must have lost 15,000 men on the occasion, for 3,200 dead were buried during the truce. The Russian cavalry must be at its last gasp for want of fodder, and the garrison of Sebastopol crippled by the numbers of sick and wounded. God send a happy issue to it all!! and that would soon come, had we *one* General-in-Chief.'

The Prince sent a copy of this letter the same day to Baron Stockmar, writing to him at the same time as follows:—

'We got back here safely yesterday. I send you copies of some travelling impressions, which I have just despatched to Uncle Leopold, so as not to be going twice over the same ground. A difficult expedition has been carried through with the *most complete* success, and will be productive of lasting advantage. Our relations with the Emperor have become more and more confidential and direct, and the alliance gives to the edifice he is rearing a certain weight and solidity (*Gehalt*) which cannot be improvised.

'Victoria has borne all the fatigues very well, and the for her really great exertions which she has made to please the people, and to call their friendly feelings into play, have met with the fullest recognition, and evoked great enthusiasm for her, in which all parties appear glad to have found a point of union.[2] You will be pleased to hear how well both the children behaved. Nothing could be more unembarrassed, more modest, or more friendly. They have made themselves general favourites, too,—especially the Prince of Wales, *qui est si gentil.* As the French are sarcastic, and not readily partial to strangers, this is so much the more important.

'I am in the midst of the misery of having to celebrate my birthday, and answering a host of letters of congratulation, besides unpacking and putting things straight, picking up the arrears caused by our journey, and preparing for our departure for Scotland, so I must conclude. We go north on the 5th, and shall occupy the new house. Remember, your room is ready, and waiting for you to consecrate it, and send me a line to say if you are coming. The mountain air will do you good.'

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[2] Strong confirmation of this was given in a letter from the Princess Lieven to her most intimate friend in England, from which the following extract was sent (16th of September) by Lord Clarendon to the Queen :—

'*La visite de la Reine a été une perfection de tout point sauf le retard du premier jour. Pour tout le reste, curiosité, bienveillance dans le public, bonne reception partout, fêtes magnifiques, temps superbe, bonne humeur, en haut en bas. La Reine ravie, émerveillée, enchantée de son hôte, témoignant son plaisir de tout. On l'a trouvée parfaitement gracieuse, toujours reine, toujours droite, tournure charmante. Voilà la verité vraie, car c'est tout le monde qui le redit.*' In sending this extract Lord Clarendon says : 'Princess Lieven's salon and *entourage* were not pleased with the visit, and she herself is in no friendly mood towards England, but the force of truth prevailed at the moment of writing.'

The Duchess of Kent was then at Abergeldie, and had sent the Prince a favourable account of the new house at Balmoral, which had just been partially completed. In acknowledging her birthday good wishes and gift, he writes to her :—

'I send you my most hearty thanks for your telegrams, for your dear letter, which I received while still in France, and for the second, written on the 26th, which reached me to-day, as well as for the beautiful clock, which made a great figure upon my table of presents to-day. You see, therefore, that I have much cause for gratitude. The clock shall accompany me to Balmoral, and take up its abiding-place upon my mantle-piece there.

'I am glad you like the building, about which I am very curious.

'I shall say little about Paris, as I want to keep your curiosity alive for all that will have to be told you by word of mouth. You can then ask, too, about the points most interesting to yourself. The whole journey has been "a perfect success," and has been unmistakeably watched over and favoured by heaven; and there is not the smallest circumstance I can think of which I would have wished otherwise. Victoria bore the great fatigues remarkably well, and won the hearts of all by her endeavours to make herself agreeable to the people. I am bound to praise the children greatly. They behaved extremely well, and pleased everybody. The task was no easy one for them, but they discharged it without embarrassment, and with natural simplicity. I have found the black shawl, and purpose laying it at your feet at Abergeldie—but not in the mud, as Sir Walter Raleigh did his cloak.

'Now farewell! Ever and always your devoted nephew and son.

'Osborne, 29th August, 1855.'

Similar acknowledgments were also sent by the Prince the same day to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg:—

'My heart's thanks for your dear lines, and good wishes for my birthday, which completes three dozen of years for me! They reached me at St. Cloud. The beautiful picture which you announce will give me great pleasure, as everything does that comes from you. The 26th (being Sunday) we solemnised in English quietude under the Imperial roof. Nineteen years ago I was in Paris with Ernest and Papa, and I have not been there since. You may imagine what a strange impression so many changes must have produced. Neuilly, where we were then received, now lies in ruins, and the grass grows upon its site. The Duke of Orleans was then alive, and unmarried; Marie and Clémentine, daughters of the house; Nemours, Aumale, and Montpensier were at school; Joinville a naval cadet. All this is vanished as if before the wind, and in its stead we brought with us two children, almost fully grown.

'We have been received everywhere with incredible enthusiasm, and cannot say enough of the kindness of the Emperor and Empress. We anticipate the best results from this visit, foremost among which must be the persistent prosecution of the war, which to you will scarcely appear in so advantageous a light. . . .

'We purpose making our escape on the 5th to our mountain home, Balmoral. We are sorely in want of the moral rest, and the bodily exercise.[3]

'Osborne, 30th August, 1855.'

Halting in Edinburgh for a night upon the way, the Court reached Balmoral on the 7th, where the Queen and Prince found the principal part of the new house ready for their occupation, and, as the Prince notes in his Diary, 'already very comfortable.' The great tower was half up, and the wing which connects it with the body of the castle was roofed. The principal terrace was also completed, but large earthworks still remained to be carried out in the hollow in front of the house. Here was something to distract the Prince's attention pleasantly from the grave deskwork in which, even during his so-called holiday, so much of his time was passed.

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[3] 'After that magnificent Paris, with all its splendour, and brilliancy, and fêtes, &c., it will be like a golden dream to you, when you are in the Highlands amongst hills, and woods, and glens, but it will be very refreshing, and quieting, and agreeable. May you enjoy it, my dearest Victoria.—*Letter to the Queen*, 1*st September, from her Sister the Princess of Hohenlohe-Langenburg.*

> 'Strange, very strange, it seemed to me,' Her Majesty writes (*Leaves from a Journal*), 'to drive past, indeed, through, the old house, the connecting part between it and the offices being broken through. The new house is beautiful. . . . An old shoe was thrown after us for good luck when we entered the hall. The house is charming, the rooms delightful, the furniture, papers, everything perfection. The view from the windows of our rooms, and from the library, drawing-room, &c. below them, of the valley of the Dee, with the mountains in the background, which one could never see from the old house, is quite beautiful.'

The new house was soon to be gladdened by good news from the seat of war. On the 8th came intelligence by telegram, that the fire upon Sebastopol had been re-opened on the 5th with effect, and that the French guns had destroyed one of the ships in the harbour. Next day brought news of the destruction of another of the ships, and of a great part of the city being on fire. A succession of telegrams on the 10th told of the rapidly approaching close of a struggle, unparalleled for the tenacity and valour on both sides with which it had been carried on. First came one from General Simpson, dated eleven P.M. on the 8th, telling that the Malakoff was in possession of the French, but that our assault on the Redan had failed. This was followed by another, dated 10.9 A.M. on the

9th, announcing that Sebastopol was in the possession of the Allies, and that the south side of the town had been evacuated by the enemy, after they had exploded their magazines and set fire to the town. Simultaneously with this came a telegram from Lord Clarendon to the Queen, with copy of one from General Pélissier, dated 8 P.M. on the 9th, stating that the Russians had sunk their steamers, and that the city was one vast scene of conflagration. Lastly came one announcing that Prince Gortschakoff had asked for an armistice to enable him to remove the remainder of his wounded.

In the *Leaves from a Journal* a sketch is given of what passed at Balmoral on this evening, which it will not be out of place to recall here. The time is after dinner :—

> 'All were in constant expectation of more telegraphic despatches. At half-past ten o'clock two arrived, one for me, and one for Lord Granville. I began reading mine, which was from Lord Clarendon, with details from Marshal Pélissier of the further destruction of the Russian ships; and Lord Granville said, "I have still better news;" on which he read, "From General Simpson, *Sebastopol is in the hands of the Allies.*" God be praised for it. Our delight was great; but we could hardly believe the good news, and from having so long, so anxiously expected it, one could not realise the actual fact.
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> 'Albert said they should go at once and light the bonfire which had been prepared when the false report of the fall of the town arrived last year, and had remained ever since, waiting to be lit. On the 5th of November, the day of the battle of Inkermann, the wind upset it, strange to say; and now again, most strangely, it only seemed to wait for our return to be lit.
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> 'The new house seems to be lucky indeed, for, from the first moment of our arrival, we have had good news. In a few minutes, Albert and all the gentlemen, in every species of attire, sallied forth, followed by all the servants, and gradually by all the population of the village—keepers, gillies, workmen—up to the top of the cairn. We waited, and saw them light the bonfire; accompanied by general cheering. It blazed forth brilliantly, and we could see the numerous figures surrounding it—some

dancing, all shouting—Ross playing his pipes, and Grant and Macdonald firing off guns continually. . . . About three-quarters of an hour after, Albert came down, and said the scene had been wild and exciting beyond everything. The people had been drinking healths in whisky, and were in great ecstasy. . . . We remained till a quarter to twelve; and just as I was undressing, all the people came down under the windows, the pipes playing, the people singing, firing off guns, and cheering, first for me, then for Albert, the Emperor of the French, and "the downfall of Sebastopol."'

One of the first acts of the Queen was to telegraph to the Emperor of the French in these words:[4] 'We congratulate the Emperor with all our hearts on the glorious news of the fall of Sebastopol, which we know will give him as much pleasure and satisfaction as it does to us. We have at length witnessed the successful result of all our labours and sufferings.' At the same time Lord Panmure was requested to send Her Majesty's warmest congratulations to General Simpson and General Pélissier.

To Baron Stockmar, the friend with whom of all others he would most have wished to discuss the probable results of the fall of Sebastopol, the Prince wrote as follows:—

'I must write you a line, as I cannot pay you a visit in your room, to share my joy with you over the fall of Sebastopol. Our bonfire on Craig Gowan, opposite the house, the setting up of which you will remember when the false news of the untraceable Tatar arrived, and which to our sorrow we had to leave behind us when we left Balmoral last year—which was, moreover, blown down by the gale on the 5th of November, Inkermann day, and found by us on our return this year scattered on the ground in melancholy plight—

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[4] On the 8th a lunatic named Bellemarre was foiled in an attempt to assassinate the Emperor at the door of the Italian Opera. He mistook the carriage, and was seized before he could fire the pistols, of which he had one in each hand.

blazed out magnificently about eleven o'clock on the evening of the 10th. It illuminated all the peaks round about; and the whole scattered population of the valleys understood the sign, and made for the mountain, where we performed towards midnight a veritable Witches' dance, supported by whisky.

'The result of all these unspeakable exertions and sufferings is truly gratifying in the highest sense. We are still quite without details, further than that the assault upon the 8th cost us alone 2,000 men: we may set down the loss of the French at double that number, because they delivered the assault at three points, and were only able to take the Malakoff. The Russians must have sustained fearful losses, as to which, however, they will probably say nothing. The result has proved that those people were quite right who maintained that the Malakoff was the key of the position. Nevertheless, from September of last year till the end of February, the French besieged the west side merely, and our troops upon the right did not extend so as to overlap the Malakoff. The siege upon the right dates, therefore, from the beginning of March; but it was the end of May before the French, under Pélissier, undertook to assault the Mamelon and the outworks. Since that time the engineers' work has made constant and rapid progress, and had advanced to within ten paces of the Malakoff. (The attack of the 18th June was a blundering episode, prematurely accelerated by the success of the 7th.) Every twenty-four hours cost the French, however, 200 men, and us close upon 60! This being the case, whatever the losses may have been in the assault, the result to us is a great saving of life, when we take into account how much we gain upon the whole, by the fact of the entire army being now set free. Every twenty-four hours' cannonade cost the Russians 1,000 men, because they were necessarily so closely packed together. A further fact ascertained is, that the vertical fire of bombs from mortars, which were thought to have been superseded by the invention of Paixhans and horizontal bombs, is nevertheless indispensable. The French, as well as ourselves, have since June brought a number into line, while the Russians had very few; and, over and above this, we had 118 guns, of which the smallest calibre was thirty-two pounds, and the largest eighty-six pounds, in position, and the French about 200. We had 89 mortars (of which the greatest number were thirteen inches diameter) and the French 120. It is not easy to estimate the guns of the Russians, but they could not have been less than 800. At the last they must have run quite out of ammunition, since we destroyed their foundries.

'Poor Seymour[5] has been wounded for the second time by a fragment of a grenade at the back of the head; still, it is only a flesh wound, and he will get over it. What the Generals will do now, we cannot tell. I hope they will not rest till they have driven the Russians fairly out of the Crimea. I imagine they will not retain the north side long, for they would have quite the same difficulty on the north side in finding supplies as they had in provisioning the garrison of the city, without any compensation for their pains beyond that of being able to contemplate the lost city and the shattered fleet. I would embark 80,000 men with all possible despatch, and march from Eupatoria upon the Strait of Perekop or Simpheropol, and so either capture the whole disorganised army, or force it to a disastrous (*unheilvollen*) retreat. The Russian army is frightfully demoralised (*angegriffen*).

'Except the first *corps d'armée*, and the Guards, and perhaps the half of the Grenadiers, all the *corps d'armée* are in the Crimea. Thirteen divisions of infantry, 6 battalions of reserve, 8 ditto rifles, 30,000 men, sailors, and marines,

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[5] Now General Sir Francis Seymour, the same who, our readers may remember, accompanied the Prince in his tour in Italy in 1839.

52 batteries of foot artillery, 8 batteries of horse artillery, with 64 guns, and 22,000 cavalry (including Cossacks), have at different times been sent in; and, counting in 10,000 militia, the strength of the Russian army in the Crimea at the present time scarcely comes up to 130,000, and these not in the best condition! Our forces are 110,000 French, 35,000 English, 12,000 Sardinians, 54,000 Turks. What we want is a united command.

'Politics on the Continent are now likely to incline more decidedly towards the Western Powers, and Austria should have every reason to feel a marked increase in her courage. I have read Diezel's last pamphlet on the formation of a National Party in Germany with the greatest interest. It contains so much that is true, and is written with so much clearness and moderation, and at the same time with so much spirit, that it cannot fail to produce a decided effect.[6]

'Prince Fritz William comes here to-morrow evening. I have received a very friendly letter from the Princess of Prussia.

'Balmoral, 13th September, 1855.'

While all were waiting anxiously for the details of what had led to the fall of Sebastopol, Lord Clarendon forwarded to the Queen a communication he had received from the Duke of Newcastle written on the 30th of August from the camp there. It went in very great detail into the state of the Allied armies, and the manner in which they were handled, and, unluckily for the character of the Duke as a prophet, was more of the nature of a Jeremiad of coming woe and disaster, than the herald of the victory so soon to follow.[7] Both Commanders-in-chief were equally condemned. General Simpson appears 'never to be *doing*, always *mooning*. He has no plan, no opinion, no hope but from the chapter of accidents.' The command of the French army, added the Duke, 'is in hands quite as unfit. I believe Pélissier's officers have no confidence in him, and I know his soldiers dislike him.' In short, according to the Duke, the Russians would quite possibly blow up the south side of Sebastopol, but certainly we had no plan for *taking* it, if it was not *given*. The Duke had no good to say of any of the armies, except that of the Sardinians under General La Marmora; but he concluded his long indictment, by asking Lord Clarendon to read it

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[6] 'I have been reading a very excellent new "brochure" by Diezel: "*Die Bildung einer Nationalen Partei in Deutschland; eine Nothwendigkeit in der jetzigen Crisis Europa's.*" I am afraid they will suppress it in most parts of poor Germany. . . . There are Albert's words in it; but of what use to our miserable people? Still it is written and printed, and I shall do my best to make it circulate. Oh, if I could but be a champion of liberty to my country!' —*Letter from the Queen's Sister to the Queen*, 1st September, 1855.

'With full allowance for the feelings of a man, who sees little that is cheering out here but British valour and good conduct, and who, when he looks back to his country, sees little else than British failure and misconduct. I am grieved beyond measure at what has occurred at home since I left it. If I had not children at home, and a name to support in my own country, I should linger long in Circassia, or anywhere else, for I see no chance of public usefulness in such a state of things as we are now reduced to. I often think of our dear Queen, and feel how completely she is, not only our main, but our only stay. There is still some little chivalry and much loyalty in England; and the throne, occupied as it now is, may keep us above the waters, but there is no longer buoyancy in any public men. Never at any former time was the country without a man whom, rightly or wrongly, it looked upon with hope. Now we are all more or less discredited. Your Government is weak, and by no means popular, but the public has no favourites, whom it wishes to see in your places.'

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[7] There were croaking prophets at home to whom the fall of Sebastopol was an unwelcome surprise. In a letter from Lord Palmerston (20th of September) to Lord Clarendon, of which there is a copy among the Prince's papers, he says, speaking of another false prophecy, that it was like an eminent statesman's (whom he names) 'confident declarations made a few days before he heard of the fall of Sebastopol, that the town would never be taken. Many people, *especially statesmen out of place*, have a wonderful fancy for making prophecies. The wise thing is to deal with circumstances as they arise, and not to be always foretelling what is to happen, remembering, however, to make timely provision for the various events that *may* happen.'

In sending the Duke of Newcastle's letter to the Queen Lord Clarendon sent with it a letter to himself from Lord Panmure, with his remarks on the Duke's criticisms. The news from Sebastopol was the best antidote to any discouragement the Duke's letter, obviously meant for the Cabinet as it was, might have inspired, and Lord Panmure was able to dispose of his complaints about the shortcomings in supplies of ammunition, clothing, stores, &c., by the announcement that they had all been anticipated and provided for.

On the 17th of September, the Prince wrote, on behalf of the Queen, to Lord Clarendon, returning this correspondence, which he says they had read with much interest. Some portions of this letter have a permanent value:—

'I am sorry,' the Prince writes, 'that the Duke ever wrote this letter. It is at all times hazardous for one going into a camp and picking up information from this or that person, and listening to the different stories flying about there, to give an opinion upon plans of operation, military system, the merit of different men in command, but it was particularly so for the Duke, who fell quite into the ways of "our own correspondent," and from very much the same causes. This siege has been an anomalous one in every way, and my astonishment is, that the troops have borne 350 days' incessant hard fighting with every possible discomfort, and deaths at the rate of from 18 to 19,000 men during that period, without grumbling at their commanders and Government much more.

'When the Duke speaks of the want of plan at the time he wrote, it is nonsense, and the result has shown it. The only plan ever gone upon since May was to work up to the Malakoff and take it; which would cause the fall of the town, but could not be done without the Redan being equally attacked, and the batteries on the Sapoune being pushed sufficiently down to reach the shipping. This was an operation of the greatest difficulty, costing the French 200, and us 60 men a night. Yet it was nobly persevered in. Now you may say, this was done by the troops, and was no merit of the commanders. Quite true. But it had to be done, and the commanders could not get the town in any other way. If they committed a fault, it was that of allowing the French to besiege the west side from October till March, whilst we could only go on with half the east side, ending opposite the Malakoff, which our engineers, however, pointed out all along as the key of the position.

'That the commanders seem now to be without a plan is lamentable. But even this must be pronounced upon with hesitation, as we know nothing of the condition of the two armies since the assault, and their combined nature will make it exceedingly difficult to allot the parts, and organise an army for the field. I hope to God, it won't be a combined one again, but an army (however organised) entrusted to one leader. But this will be full of difficulty with Turks, Sardinians, French, and English. Pélissier cannot ride (from his size), Simpson is too old, and also deficient as a horseman. Omar Pasha is not trusted by the French, and is certainly *cautious*. La Marmora has no claim to command the army.

'The contrast which the Duke establishes between the Sardinian army and ours is most unfair. . . . It has not done a day's work in the trenches, and but for the 16th (on the Tschernaja) would not have heard a shot fired. Of course, it used the three months' rest and leisure to organise itself as well as possible, and still fell a greater victim to cholera than any other force out there. However, all accounts agree in representing the Sardinians as very fine troops. They have the inestimable advantage, that they are commanded, like ours, by gentlemen, but have the great advantage over us, that these gentlemen put the soldier above the gentleman, whilst from our constitutional history and national habits, the soldier is disliked, the officer almost seeks to excuse himself for being an officer, by assuming as unsoldierlike a garment and manner as he possibly can. The Sardinians would speak of a soldierlike gentleman (the impression La Marmora made upon the Duke), whilst we speak of a gentlemanlike officer, like General Estcourt, Lord Burghersh, &c. &c. All our civilian interference, now the increasing fashion, necessarily must tend to increase this evil, which may finally cause the ruin of our army. . . .'

The Duke of Newcastle, in the letter which we have quoted, and in others addressed by him from the camp to Lord Clarendon, called himself a grumbler, but, if so, he was a grumbler of no common sort. He told his impressions only to the Government, and in the belief, that by doing so he might help them in the task, of which he had so well known the burden. 'If I consulted my own interest,' he wrote, 'I should either hold my tongue altogether, or publish abroad all I write to you privately, and thus procure the character of an "Administrative Reformer," but I wish to do some good if I can, though I confess I feel that the time for my doing so has gone by.' By the time he wrote this, he had seen the attack on the Malakoff, the success of which he imputed solely to the accident of the Russians being surprised by it, at the time they had withdrawn from the tower for dinner. He also witnessed the assault on the Redan, that promised at first so well, but was turned to failure from the inexperience of the troops, 'gabion fighters and raw boys,' as he called them, engaged in it, and a failure to back it up by sufficient numbers even of these.[8] The Duke also rode through the city, on the 10th, while the heat of the burning buildings was still 'so great as to be suffocating,' and marvelled at the rapidity and completeness of the ruin which fire had wrought on a city entirely built of stone. Looking at the remains of its beauty, its magnificent docks, its stately barracks, he exclaims, 'Verily, this is a heavy blow to the pride of Russia!' It was a strange caprice of fortune that the Minister, who had penned the despatch which directed the expedition to Sebastopol, and who had been driven from office on the groundless suspicion of lukewarmness in prosecuting the campaign, should enter the blazing city with our victorious troops. And what were the last words of the same letter of this lukewarm advocate of the war? 'I am more than ever convinced, that we have only to go on and conquer. They will not wait for us to take the north side, if we show a resolve to have it.'

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[8] Of the officers he says: 'They fought as English gentlemen, I hope, ever will fight under any discouragement, and in any struggle, be it ever so hopeless ;

Such, however, was not the view of the Commanders-in-chief, and in his next letter to Lord Clarendon (15th September), the Duke resumes his wail of lamentation at their want of energy. 'We are stupefied with unexpected, and, in one sense, undeserved success—paralysed with victory!—so

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and say what "Jacob Omnium," or any other journalist may, there were gallant lads of 17 and 18 that day, who led on their men as no bayonet officer, fine fellows as many of them are, ever can or will. Alas! not one of these noble boys, I fear, returned alive, and in their rank, and at their age, not one of them could have been spirited on to deeds of untold heroism by any other means than love of their honour and a high sense of duty to their Queen and their country.' As to the men, to whom the terrible task of storming the Redan was entrusted, this is what was said of them in a letter (11th of September) to Colonel Phipps from a distinguished officer of the Guards: 'Nothing could be better than the way in which our stormers led into the Redan, and, from all I hear, nothing could be much worse than the manner in which the supports not only hesitated, but declined to follow their officers. It is the old story, England annihilates all her old soldiers in a first campaign, and then is fain to believe the specious twaddle of the newspapers, that they can be replaced by the half-grown, half-drilled boys that come here as recruits. One regiment of old soldiers would have taken the Redan in half-an-hour, and we could then have claimed half the victory as ours.' These are words that cannot surely be too firmly kept before the eyes of military reformers.

astounded and stunned by our triumph, that we are motionless—apparently incapable of counsel, as we are of action.' This conclusion was shared by the Government at home. The absolute want of initiative on the part of Generals Simpson and Pélissier seemed to them incomprehensible. As the Queen wrote to Lord Panmure (2nd October), 'there may be good reasons why the army should not move, but we have only one . . . . When General Simpson telegraphed before, that he must wait to know the intentions and plans of the Russians, the Queen was tempted to advise a reference to St. Petersburg for them!' The Duke of Newcastle found his impatience at this waiting policy becoming so intolerable, that he could not bear longer to be an eyewitness of it. 'I am becoming such a grumbler,' he wrote, 'that I will leave this place immediately, and I hope my next to you will be from Circassia!'[9]

But while the great crisis, at which the war had now arrived, was engaging the anxious attention not merely of the Cabinet, but also of the Queen and Prince, a domestic event was in progress, than which none could come more closely home to their hearts—the betrothal of their eldest child. On the 13th of September the Prince, as we have seen, had written to Baron Stockmar, 'the Prince Fritz William comes here to-morrow evening.' The old man's heart doubtless beat more quickly than usual, as he read the words, for it had long been his hope to see this young Prince united to the Princess Royal—the child of his special regard—and an alliance thus cemented between England and the only other great Protestant State of Europe. The young people were known to each other, and Prince Frederick William came prepared with the consent of his parents and of the King of Prussia to ask for the hand of the Princess on whom his heart had for some time been set. We can picture the pleasure with which Baron Stockmar read the following passage in a letter from the Prince:—

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[9] The information obtained from the Russians themselves, after peace was concluded, showed that the civilians were right, and the Commanders-in-chief wrong. Many proofs of this are before us; but we have only space to cite what was said on this subject by Sir Edmund Lyons. He visited Sebastopol in July 1856, when he had opportunities of free communication with Russian officers as to the events of the siege. Writing to General Grey on the 28th of that month, he says:—'The Russians admit, that if we had sent 30,000 men to Nicolaieff, and 20,000 men to Kaffa and Arabat, as poor Bruat and I urged Pélissier to do, immediately after the fall of the south side, success at both places wauld have been certain.' And again:—'They admitted unhesitatingly that if we had threatened a landing between Sebastopol and Eupatoria after the fall of the south side, they would have left the Crimea by all the practicable routes; but, as you know, Pélissier laughed me to scorn for proposing it.'

'Now for the "*bonne bouche!*" The event you are interested in reached an active stage this morning after breakfast. The young man laid his proposal before us with the permission of his parents, and of the King; we accepted it for ourselves, but requested him to hold it in suspense as regards the other party till after her Confirmation. Till then all the simple unconstraint of girlhood is to continue undisturbed. In the spring the young man wishes to make his offer to herself, and possibly to come to us along with his parents and his engaged sister. The seventeenth birthday is to have elapsed before the actual marriage is thought of, and this will therefore not come off till the following spring.

'The secret is to be kept *tant bien que mal*, the parents and the King being informed of the true state of the case forthwith—namely, that we, the parents and the young man, are under a pledge, so far as such pledge is possible, and that the young lady herself is to be asked after her Confirmation. In the meantime there will be much to discuss; and I would entreat of you to come to us soon, that we may talk over matters face to face, and hear what you have to advise. The young gentleman is to leave us again on the 28th. In this matter he placed himself at our disposal; and I suggested fourteen days as not too long and not too short for a visit of the kind. I have been much pleased with him. His chiefly prominent qualities are great straightforwardness, frankness, and honesty. He appears to be free from prejudices, and pre-eminently well-intentioned; he speaks of himself as personally greatly attracted by Vicky. That she will have no objection to make, I regard as probable.'

'Balmoral, 20th September, 1855.'

The next day Prince Albert was seized with an attack of rheumatism in the left shoulder, from which he suffered for some time most acutely. 'I have endured frightful torture,' is the entry in his Diary on the 22nd. On the 23rd, 'not much better.' On the 25th, 'I continue to suffer terribly.' To this attack, significant of derangement of the health from the too great strain upon the system, caused by continued work and anxiety, the Prince refers in his next letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'If I have not written to you for a week, this has arisen from my not being able to hold a pen, and even now I shall only be able to manage it but indifferently. I have had a regular attack of lumbago (*Hexenschuss*) in my right shoulder, with spasms in the right arm, which made it all but impossible for me to move, and, worse than all, caused me nights of sleeplessness and pain. Now I am better again, though still "a cripple."

'Victoria is greatly excited—still all goes smoothly and prudently. The Prince is really in love, and the little lady does her best to please him. . . . The day after to-morrow the young gentleman takes his departure. We have to-day received the answers from Coblenz,[10] where they are in raptures; the communication has been made to the King at Stolzenfels, and has been hailed by him with cordial satisfaction. They are quite at one with us as to the postponement of the betrothal till after the Confirmation, and of the marriage till after the seventeenth birthday.

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[10] Where the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia were at the time.

'Lord Clarendon sends warm congratulations on the alliance, and has heard the highest encomiums on the young man. Lord Palmerston says, "He trusts that the event, when it takes place, will contribute as much to the happiness of those more immediately concerned, and to the comfort of Your Majesty and the Royal family, as it undoubtedly will to the interests of the two countries and of Europe in general." Now, however, you must come to us, for we have very much to talk over.'

'Balmoral, 28th September, 1855.'

To keep the secret from the young lady, as first proposed, was obviously impossible. '*On devine ceux qui vous aiment*,' as the Emperor of the French said in his letter to the Prince quoted at the beginning of this chapter. What happened on the morrow is thus told in *The Leaves from a Journal:*—

'29th September, 1855.

'Our dear Victoria was this day engaged to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who had been on a visit to us since the 14th. He had already spoken to us, on the 20th, of his wishes; but we were uncertain, on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself, or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so, and during our ride up *Craig-na-Ban* this afternoon, he picked a piece of white heather (the emblem of "good luck") which he gave to her; and this enabled him to make an allusion to his hopes and wishes as they rode down *Glen Girnoch*, which led to this happy conclusion.'

In the following letter the Prince continues to his friend the story of the betrothal:—

'Prince Fritz William left us yesterday. Vicky has indeed behaved *quite admirably*, as well during the closer explanation on Saturday, as in the self-command which she displayed subsequently and at the parting. She manifested towards Fritz and ourselves the most child-like simplicity and candour, and the best feeling. The young people are ardently in love with one another, and the purity, innocence, and unselfishness of the young man have been on his part equally touching . . . . Abundance of tears were shed. While deep visible revolutions in the emotional natures of the two young people and of the mother were taking place, by which they were powerfully agitated, my feeling was rather one of cheerful satisfaction and gratitude to God, for bringing across our path so much that was noble and good, where it may, nay must, conduce to the happiness for life of those whom He has endowed with those qualities, and who are in themselves so dear to me.

'The real object of my writing to you now is to enclose Vicky's letter to you, which goes with this, and in which the child finds vent for her own feelings. Let me once more adjure you to come to us soon. We have so much to talk over.

'At Sebastopol our Generals appear to be suffering under a remarkable lack of brains. There are good builders there, at any rate, for our people are unable to make a breach anywhere . . . .'

'I am tortured and tormented with rheumatism, and can scarcely hold the pen.

'Balmoral, 2nd October, 1855.'

Such an event as that which had just occurred in the Royal home was sure, somehow or other, despite every effort at secrecy, to get wind. Surmise had already been busy with the name of the young Prussian prince; and now *The*

Times, in a leading article on the 3rd of October, spoke of the projected alliance in language as little considerate to the feelings of the Sovereign and her husband, or of the young people themselves, as it was insulting to the Prussian King and nation, and indeed, to all Germany. To this the Prince alludes in the following letter:—

'Dear Stockmar,—Your long letter reached me safely two days ago. Since then you will have received so much news from here that there is no longer occasion to answer much of what you say in it. Still, I am anxious to omit nothing that is essential to your full knowledge of the affair. . . . The present position of the business is this. The son's offer, and our acceptance, in so far as we ourselves are concerned, has been communicated to the parents in writing, and in my letter to the Prince's father I requested him to inform the uncle [the King], in our name, how thoroughly we regard his support of his nephew's proposal as a proof of his friendship, and to say that our sole reason for not writing to himself is, that we wish the offer to the Princess herself postponed till after the Confirmation. What has taken place since has certainly altered the position of matters at home, still we see much political and personal convenience in adhering, as far as others are concerned, to the position which was originally taken up. . . . For any public declaration of betrothal we are at present quite unprepared. We have not yet had an opportunity of speaking with any of our Ministers; we must deal circumspectly towards France.

'*The Times* has fired off an article (on the 3rd) that is at once truly *scandalous* in itself and *degrading* to the country, with a view to provoke hostile public opinion, but happily it has excited universal disgust by its extravagance and discourtesy. Victoria has written to our Ally, and expressed to him our hopes for Vicky's future as a proof of personal confidence, and I doubt not he will acknowledge it as such. A sense of decorum demands that the affair should not be *publicly* discussed before the Confirmation. In the meantime we shall have leisure to arrange whatever is right. *Your* good counsel at *our elbow* is indispensably necessary for us, so come to us as soon as your health will let you. The secret, as you say, will be no secret, but no one will have any right to talk of the affair publicly. The Royal family here know what every one knows—viz. that a preliminary offer has been made, and that it is to be renewed after Easter.

'Balmoral, 7th October, 1855.'

The Times' article was one of the worst of a series, by which the leading journal had done its best to make England detested throughout Germany—a result not to be wondered at, when the tone and language are considered, which the writers, professing to represent English opinion, thought proper to adopt. To talk of Prussia, as this article did, as a 'paltry German dynasty,' which could not 'survive the downfall of Russian influence,' showed as little political sagacity as good taste. It was hard enough for a nation to have to bear with the weak, but well-meaning Sovereign, then upon the throne. That contempt should be poured upon themselves and upon the scions of the Royal House, to whom they justly looked forward to assert for them in due time a dignified position among the other States of Europe, was intolerable.

The young Prince Frederick William and his father were notoriously hostile to the principles of the party at Berlin, which had done its best to prostrate Prussia at the feet of the Czar. But it suited the purpose of the journalist to speak of the future husband of the English Princess Royal, as destined to enter the Russian service, 'and to pass these years which flattering anticipation now destines to a crown in ignominious attendance as a general officer on the levee of his Imperial master, having lost even the privilege of his birth, which is conceded to no German in Russia.' In the same spirit the English people were asked to contemplate the probability of their Princess becoming anti-English in feeling, and being sent back to them at no distant date as 'an exile and a fugitive.'

It was too palpable to escape notice, at whom, under cover of this attack on Prussia, the blow was really intended to be struck. This was no other than the Prince Consort, for, if all the writer said were true, it necessarily followed that in sanctioning this alliance the Prince was giving proof of those sympathies with the despotic dynasties of the Continent, and of Russia in particular, which it suited a certain class of writers to insinuate against him. He could, however, afford to bear in silence the surmises of such accurate observers, knowing as he did that the whole influence of his life had been exerted in support of the right of every civilised nation to a dominant voice in the administration of its own affairs, and that no consideration, public or private, would have induced the Queen or himself to imperil the happiness of their child by a marriage, in which she could not have found scope to practise the constitutional principles in which she had been reared.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

The fall of Sebastopol was a step, and an important one, towards bringing Russia to terms; still it was only a step. We knew with some accuracy how her resources had been strained. The troops in the Crimea were greatly straitened for provisions. A great deficiency in the last harvest throughout South Russia had reduced the supply of corn there to what was wanted for local consumption. Supplies of corn food could not be obtained except from a distance of from three to five hundred miles; and as these had all to be transported by land, and a horse in that distance would consume more than he could draw or carry, it had become practically impossible to keep up the supplies. Up to the end of August the losses of the Russians in the Crimea itself were understood to amount to at least 153,000 men. By Prince Gortschakoff's own admission the decisive 8th of September had cost them 39 superior and 328 subaltern officers and 11,228 men. Still they clung tenaciously to the north side of Sebastopol, and to the commanding positions by which they were able to check any direct advance by the Allies. The Government gave no sign that they were disposed to treat for peace; indeed, the Czar, in an Imperial Rescript (20th September), while congratulating the garrison of the city on having left only 'blood-stained ruins' to the enemy, whom they had kept for eleven months at bay by their noble courage and self-denial, appealed with unabated resolution to them to continue the conflict in defence of 'Orthodox Russia, who had taken up arms for a just cause—the cause of Christianity.' This manifesto was followed by a rumour that a Russian council of war at Nicolaieff, at which the Czar was present, had decided to hazard a great battle, on the issue of which would depend whether they would evacuate the Crimea or not.

It was natural that the people at home should be impatient for some forward movement of the Allied forces to follow up the blow dealt at Sebastopol, before the Russians had time to recover from the discouragement and exhaustion under which they were then labouring. Had these forces been under one general, and acting for Governments moved by one interest and by one purpose, it is more than probable that they would not have been allowed to remain as they did, pent up in the positions which they had so long occupied, with only the difference, that the ruins of half the city had fallen into their hands. But the views at Paris were not identical with those in London. There people were beginning to say that in taking Sebastopol enough had been done. The honours of war had of late rested chiefly with the French. The chances of a fresh campaign might, perhaps, dim some of their present lustre; while the expenses of another winter in the Crimea must run up to a figure which the Emperor's Government professed itself unable to face. The season was far advanced, and the English Government learned with some dismay that the order had been given to recall a large portion of the French force to France. Assurances were at the same time given that they would be replaced by equal numbers. This might or might not be the case, but at all events it soon became apparent that any great movement must be reserved for a spring campaign.

Meanwhile some minor successes helped still further to cripple the Russian resources. After keeping Odessa in panic for some days by anchoring off the city, a portion of the Allied fleet proceeded to Kinburn, where the united rivers of the Bug and the Dnieper fall into the Black Sea through a channel protected by three forts. A fierce bombardment of a few hours (17th October) silenced the guns of the forts, and upon this the garrison, 1,500 strong, with 70 guns, were forced to surrender. A few days later (29th October) a strong force of Russian cavalry was defeated near Eupatoria by three regiments of French cavalry under General d'Allonville, supported by a body of Turkish and Egyptian cavalry under Achmet Pasha. In Asia Minor General Mouravieff had sustained a most serious defeat before Kars on the 29th of September, in which 5,000 Russians had been left dead on the field—a defeat which must have led to the raising of the siege but for the culpable failure of the Porte and its allies to send relief to the starving heroes by whom it had been inflicted. What might have been done, had prompt and vigorous measures been taken to attack the Russians in Asia Minor, was seen by the success of Omar Pasha with the comparatively small Turkish force with which he advanced from Redoute Kaleh to the Ingour, where he encountered and defeated the Russians on the 6th of November. But the same want of unity of counsel and control, which checked any vigorous action in the Crimea, aggravated in this instance by the jealousies and inertness which prevailed at Constantinople, arrested any such decisive action in Asia Minor as would have prevented 'the bulwark of Asia Minor'[1] from passing into the hands of the adversary whom it had triumphantly held at bay.

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[1] Kars was so called by General Mouravieff, in the Order of the Day which he issued upon its fall. Kars surrendered on the 28th of November, the garrison marching out with all the honours of war, and the officers of all ranks retaining their swords. Famine did what the superior forces of the Russians could not do. The bitter feeling created throughout England by the news of this close to the splendid courage and endurance displayed in the

If the ardour, never great, of France for the war, had somewhat abated, such was not the case with England. She was more than ever bent upon pursuing it to an effective close. All her energies had been devoted to strengthening herself for the task. She was determined to show that, if her system had brought suffering and disaster on her soldiers, she knew how to make atonement for the past by a future, in which their endurance and their valour should be put to no unfair trial through want of due provision for the contingencies of warfare. Our dockyards and arsenals were busily adding to the already overwhelming strength of our fleet, and the country provided with lavish hands whatever funds were necessary to enable its generals to lead their troops wherever they determined that the enemy might be assailed with the best assurance of success.

But the question who these generals should be had now become urgent. General Simpson, feeling more strongly than ever that the task entrusted to him was too heavy for his hands, and also conscious, perhaps, that he had not inspired the Government with the confidence necessary for his own peace of mind, resigned the Commandership-in-chief. There was no one so pre-eminent for military genius or distinguished service, that on him the office could by general consent be devolved. Several at once suggested themselves, all with qualifications that entitled them to high consideration, but their merits were so evenly balanced that it was hard to

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defence of Kars, was fully shared by the Sovereign. 'The fall of Kars, which can now no longer be doubted,' the Queen wrote (12th December) to Lord Clarendon, 'is indeed a disgrace to the Allies, who have kept 200,000 men since September in the Crimea "to make roads!" The chief blame, however, rests certainly with Marshal Pélissier, who would not let any troops go to the relief of the garrison, whilst he must have premeditated not using his army in the Crimea.'

say who should be preferred; while it was impossible to select one without wounding the susceptibilities of others, who might complain of a slight, were a younger or less experienced man to be put over their heads. 'To find any officer against whom nothing can be said,' Lord Palmerston wrote (16th October) to the Prince, 'implies the choice either of such men as Wellington or Napoleon, or of men who have never been employed at all; and that of itself would be an absolute disqualification.'

The dilemma in which the Government were thus placed as to the appointment of a successor to General Simpson was the subject of anxious communications between them and the Sovereign. They were still unable to see their way out of it, when the Prince wrote to Lord Palmerston from Balmoral on the 12th of October. 'The subject,' he said, 'is all day long engrossing my attention,' and he proceeded to develop a plan, which had struck him 'as likely to diminish present difficulties, whilst it will hold out many general advantages.' This plan was the subdivision of the army into two *Corps-d'armée*, each under the command of a senior officer of high position, and subject to the general control of the Commander-in-Chief. The balance of opinion, as the Prince knew, was in favour of the appointment of Sir William Codrington as General Simpson's successor. But he was junior to three Generals, each of whom might aspire to the office.[2] Something must be done to conciliate their feelings, and the Prince thought that they might be reconciled to his being placed over their heads, if two of their number were appointed to the command of the proposed *Corps-d'armée.* The other arrangements which would follow, if this course were adopted, would increase the efficiency of the control of the army, and be agreeable to its officers. The general advantages of his plan, the Prince considered, would be, that while strengthening the arrangements for supervision, it would diminish the labours of the Commander-in-Chief, and make a large body of troops more easy to handle.

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[2] One of these was Sir Colin Campbell, who returned to England on leave about this time. When the arrangement suggested by the Prince, as mentioned in the text, was carried out, the Queen saw him, and having stated how much she wished that his valuable services should not be lost in the Crimea, he replied, that he would return immediately, 'for that, if the Queen wished it, he was ready to serve under a corporal.'—(*Letter from the Queen to Lord Hardinge*, Nov. 22, 1855.)

'Both Lord Raglan and General Simpson,' he writes, 'have declared their inability to trouble themselves much about plans of campaign, while their whole time was taken up with writing and correspondence,' and the last of the considerations he had mentioned was 'of peculiar importance, from the nature of the present war, which may require divided operations.' These views were developed in detail by the Prince, and he concluded his letter by the request that it might be considered by the Cabinet, and that Lord Hardinge might be consulted on the subject.

The Prince's proposal was taken into consideration by the Military Committee of the Cabinet, and by them discussed with Lord Hardinge. On the 16th of October Lord Palmerston wrote to the Prince, that the arrangement which he had suggested was regarded by Lord Hardinge as one which would be 'advantageous to Her Majesty's service in the Crimea,' and he added, 'agreeing as the members of the Cabinet did on the conclusive force of the arguments in its favour which were stated in your Royal Highness's letter, we unanimously determined to propose this arrangement to the Cabinet for adoption.' The Cabinet, when the matter was brought before them, arrived at the same determination. 'I have only to say further,' Lord Palmerston writes in conclusion, 'that I and all the other members of the Cabinet feel greatly obliged to your Royal Highness for having suggested an arrangement which had not occurred to any of us, but which when proposed and explained at once obtained the assent of all those whose duty it was to take it into consideration.' Thus did the calm clear head, ever at work for the welfare of the State and the guidance of the Sovereign, resolve, amid the silence of the hills, a problem for which neither the Cabinet nor the Commander-in-Chief had found a solution.

On the 17th of October the Queen and Prince returned to Windsor Castle, having halted for a night at Edinburgh on the way. The Prince had been able to shake off the severe attack of rheumatism, thanks to the bracing air of the north, and a few days of good sport in the deer-forest. No sooner was he back in the south, than he resumed the unintermitting work which always awaited him there. It was at this time that our Government learned, not without dismay, the intention of the French Emperor to withdraw 100,000 men from the Crimea, on the ground that public opinion in France would not support him in the expense of maintaining so large a force there during the winter doing nothing, and exposed to a continuance of hardships, which had already told severely upon the health of the troops. Such a purpose, if carried out, could not fail to act as an encouragement to Russia. There was no reason to doubt the determination of the Emperor to go hand in hand with us loyally to the last in effecting the object for which we had embarked in the war, but the same confidence was not felt, that influences were not at work in the enemy's interest at Paris to embarrass both his Government and ours in the event of negotiations for peace being opened by Russia. What happened soon afterwards showed that this mistrust was not wholly unfounded.

Such was the position of affairs when the Prince addressed the following letter to Baron Stockmar :—

'There has been a terrible pause in our correspondence, occasioned partly by our changing our quarters to Windsor, partly, however, by your letter of the 6th, which points at another in continuation of it to follow immediately. Up to this moment it has not made its appearance; but I cannot wait longer. We are all well. We miss the fine mountains and the pure air of Balmoral, but are on the other hand indemnified for these by a superabundance of business.

'I have worked out a plan for the Reorganisation of our Army in the Crimea, and its division into two *Corps-d'armée*, under one chief, which has been adopted by the Ministry, and will, I hope, bear good fruits. Sir W. Codrington gets the Commandership-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell and Sir W. Eyre take the Divisions, General Wyndham becomes Chief of the General Staff, Generals Simpson, Bentinck, Markham, and Airy return.

'I have just completed a Memoir on Examinations and New Rules of Admission for the Diplomatic Body, a question which has been stirred by the Administrative Reform agitation, and am now engaged in preparing an address on the influence of Science and Art on our Manufactures, which I am to deliver at the laying of the foundation stone of the Birmingham and Midland Counties Institute.

'Our Cabinet has sustained a loss in Sir William Molesworth, as to whose successor no decision has yet been come. Lord Elgin is likely to come into the Cabinet in Lord Canning's place. There are people who maintain that young Lord Stanley (Lord Derby's son) is to be had. This would not be more remarkable than the prevailing belief that the Peelites have come to an understanding with Disraeli, and will, along with Cobden and Bright, and perhaps John Russell, form a Peace party.

'Up to this time the peace feeling has been stronger in France than here, and gives us much to do. This justifies the apprehension you have long entertained. What is said is: "*Si la France doit continuer la guerre à grands sacrifices, il lui faut des objets plus nationaux, plus Français:* Poland, Italy, the left bank of the Rhine, &c.[3] For this we are prepared, and for these purposes might recall our army from the Black Sea by degrees." Herein lies one of the causes of our inactivity in the Crimea! The position taken up by Austria and Prussia is alone to blame for all, and I tremble for the Nemesis!

'In the matrimonial affair, nothing new has transpired. I am giving Vicky every evening an hour for conversation, in which our chief topic is history. She knows a great deal. I also give her subjects, which she works out for me. Her intellect is quick and thoroughly sound (*richtig*) in its operations.

'As you speak to me in your letter of the value of *the right time* in human measures, a theme on which you often discourse, it may perhaps interest you to know how completely Napoleon agrees with you in one of his letters to his brother Joseph. I transcribe the passage: "*Ce sont là les opérations de la paix; tout cela doit venir avec elle, et cette paix arrivera. Le moyen de faire entendre à des hommes de l'imagination de M. Roederer* QUE LE TEMPS EST LE GRAND ART DE L'HOMME,—*que ce qui ne doit être fait qu'en* 1810 *ne peut être fait en* 1807! *La fibre Gauloise ne se plie pas au calcul du temps. C'est cependant par cette seule considération que j'ai réussi dans tout ce que j'ai fait.*"

'Now I will conclude with my *ceterum censeo*, "that you are to come to us." You are most longingly looked for.

'Windsor Castle, 29th October, 1855.'

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[3] The folly of the last of these projects, so steadily fomented through a long series of years by M. Thiers and others—a folly to be afterwards so bitterly expiated—needed no demonstration. On the 11th of April, 1855, in a letter from the Queen to Lord Clarendon, these prophetic words occur: '*The first Frenchman who should hostilely approach the Rhine would set the whole of Germany on fire.*'

The Prince had now added to his long list of correspondents, another in the person of his future son-in-law. From him he had received a letter, in which, among other things, the young Prince spoke in strong terms of reprobation of the devices resorted to by the reactionary party in Prussia to secure the return of a majority of mere Government tools to the National Assembly. The terms of the Prince's reply on this subject are a striking commentary on the suspicions referred to at the close of the last chapter, as to his sympathy with the despotic governments of the Continent. As addressed to the future Sovereign of a great Empire, the whole letter is full of interest and instruction :—

'My dear Fritz,—Accept my best thanks for your friendly lines of the 22nd ult.

'The state of Prussia, as you describe it, is most critical, and designs such as those contemplated by the reactionists, prosecuted by such means as are at this moment practised in regard to the elections, may result in extreme danger to the monarchy. For if the world be overruled by a God, as I believe it is, vile and wicked actions must bear evil fruits, which frequently do not show themselves at once, but long years afterwards, as the Bible tells us in the words, 'the sins of the fathers are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation.' This being so, I ask myself, what the duties of those who are to come after are in reference to the sowing of such dragon's teeth? And I am constrained to answer to myself, that they are enjoined by morality, conscience, and patriotism, not to stand aloof as indifferent spectators of the destruction of a Constitution that has been sworn to. And when I consider what I should do in the present state of things, this much is quite clear to me, that I would record a solemn protest against such proceedings, not by way of opposition to the Government, but in defence of the rights of those, whose rights I should regard as inseparable from my own—those of my country and my people—and in order that I might absolve my conscience from any suspicion of participation in the unholy work. At the same time, however, that my conduct might be divested of every semblance of being dictated by a spirit of opposition or desire for popularity,—and in order, it may be, to make the step itself unnecessary—I should in all confidence make those who are contemplating the wrong aware, that, if it were persisted in, I should feel myself compelled to adopt this course. This done, I should entertain no animosity towards my friends, but, on the contrary, should live on upon terms of peace with the reigning powers.

'I am satisfied, that an attitude of this kind would inspire the delinquents with a certain measure of alarm, and help to keep the nation from losing all hope, and there is no such solid basis for patience as hope.

'In your letter to Victoria of the 3rd, which she received yesterday, you speak of your new labours and studies in the different Ministerial departments. When you have worked in them for some time, the truth will become obvious to you of Axel Oxenstiern's saying, "My son, you will be surprised, with how little wisdom the world is governed." I am only afraid, that it will be nobody's interest to explain essential principles to you, and that, on the contrary, they will try, perhaps not unintentionally, to overwhelm you with the multiplicity of details and of so-called work. But this good must at any rate ensue, that you will become thoroughly acquainted with what is making history. Most German bureaucrats cannot, and even will not, see the wood for the trees; they even regard the abstract idea of the wood as something dangerous, and measure its value by the density with which the trees are huddled together, not by the vigour of their growth. Added to which, the weight and number of German official documents is something appalling.

'In another way Vicky is also very busy: she has learned much in many directions. . . . She now comes to me every evening from six to seven, when I put her through a kind of general catechizing, and in order to give precision to her ideas, I make her work out certain subjects by herself, and bring me the results to be revised. Thus she is now engaged in writing a short Compendium of Roman History. . . .

'Of late we have had rains without intermission, which have made us apprehensive of floods. Prices of all kinds are still frightfully high, still there is nothing like poverty in the country, and the wages of labour are so high, that recruiting does not go on so well as we could wish.

'From the Crimea we have excellent news, so far as the condition of the troops and the preparations for the winter are concerned, but not as to any vigorous effort to drive the Russians from the Crimea. Our army will by the spring number on the spot 50,000 men, which, with the Turkish contingent of 20,000 men under General Vivian, and 15,000 Sardinians, exclusive of French and Turks, will form a very imposing force.

'Now, however, I will indeed "let you go," as they say in Vienna.

'Windsor Castle, 6th November, 1855.'

A few days after this letter was written, the Queen and Prince were much distressed by the tidings that Her Majesty's brother, Prince Leiningen, had been struck with apoplexy, which, however he might rally for a time, they felt was virtually a death-blow to a man of his energetic and active habits of mind. Allusion to this is made in the following letter by the Prince to Baron Stockmar:—

'I have not written to you for a long time, having been always under the conviction I should one day hear from the children, "Do you know, Papa, that the Baron is in his room below?" The Baron, however, is not there, as I have only too good cause to know, and I wish I could feel confident that he was coming! November and December in Coburg are wretched months, and anything but good for your health; here it is much better, and this you know! We positively must have some talk face to face with you, if everything is to go well, and for this much depends on you.

'Charles's apoplectic stroke was very serious, and causes much concern and apprehension for the future. It will be a source of no small anxiety to himself.

'The troops will go into winter quarters in the Crimea. After beginning the campaign last year with 25,000 men and 35 guns, and well-nigh losing our whole army in the disastrous siege, we stand there now with 51,000 men, 94 field-pieces (*bespannten Geschützen*) and 4,000 cavalry, and our Turkish legion is good for 20,000 men, besides which the regiments of the Foreign Legion will by the spring amount to 10,000 men; four excellent regiments, two German and two Swiss, have already been despatched to Constantinople. In Malta we have organised a depôt of 10,000 men. This is no bad result after the taking of Sebastopol.

'In Paris the passion for peace has infected the moneyed interest, and the war will yet cost a great deal of money. Here the enthusiasm is unabated, and the resources unimpaired. By the spring we shall have 150 steam and mortar boats, of a new construction, capable of sailing in all waters. In 1853 we had not one.

'Let me soon hear from you but two words: "I am coming."

'Windsor Castle, November 19th, 1855.'

In the midst of the numberless public questions of moment which preoccupied the Prince's attention, he had found time to prepare one of his most suggestive addresses for the occasion of his laying the first stone of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. On the 22nd of November he performed this ceremony, and delivered his address at a banquet in the Town Hall immediately afterwards. There were many austere critics present on the occasion, some of them themselves great speakers. The impression produced upon them by the Prince was that of a man, who had not only thought for himself, but thought deeply on subjects which they had themselves made the study of their lives, and who possessed a power of expressing his thoughts with a masterly precision and conciseness, which they despaired to rival, while suggesting at the same time new and wide veins of speculation into which his ideas might be developed. The object of the Institute, expressed by the Prince himself as being 'the introduction of science and art as the unconscious regulators of productive industry,'—science, to discover the laws of nature, art to teach their application—was one for which he felt the strongest sympathy. If work, the lot of the mass of mankind, is ever to be otherwise than irksome, the head must guide the hand,—the principles which regulate the forces with which we come in contact, as well as the ends which all work serves, must be understood,—the workman must take an intelligent pride in the product of his skill. To serve towards this result in the heart of one of the great hives of skilled industry being the purpose of the Institute, the Prince naturally seized the opportunity to speak out his own strong convictions as to the direction to be given to the education of the class for whose benefit the Institute was intended. After pointing out what science had done for mankind, and the infinite prospects of valuable knowledge yet to be won within its domain, the Prince thus concluded his address :—

'The study of the laws by which the Almighty governs the Universe is therefore our bounden duty. Of these laws our great academies and seats of education have, rather arbitrarily, selected only two spheres or groups (as I may call them) as essential parts of our national education: the laws which regulate quantities and proportions, which form the subject of mathematics, and the laws regulating the expression of our thoughts, through the medium of language, that is to say, grammar, which finds its purest expression in the classical languages. These laws are most important branches of knowledge, their study trains and elevates the mind, but they are not the only ones; there are others which we cannot disregard, which we cannot do without.

'There are, for instance, the laws governing the human mind, and its relation to the Divine Spirit (the subject of logic and metaphysics); there are those which govern our bodily nature and its connection with the soul (the subject of physiology and psychology); those which govern human society, and the relations between man and man (the subjects of politics, jurisprudence, and political economy); and many others.

'Whilst of the laws just mentioned some have been recognised as essentials of education in different institutions, and some will, by the course of time, more fully assert their right to recognition, the laws regulating matter and form are those which will constitute the chief object of *your* pursuits; and, as the principle of subdivision of labour is the one most congenial to our age, I would advise you to keep to this speciality, and to follow with undivided attention chiefly the sciences of mechanics, physics, and chemistry, and the fine arts in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

'You will thus have conferred an inestimable boon upon your country, and in a short time have the satisfaction of witnessing the beneficial results upon our national powers of production. Other parts of the country will, I doubt not, emulate your example; and I live in hope that all these institutions will some day find a central point of union, and thus complete their national organisation.'

Two days afterwards the Prince wrote to Baron Stockmar:—

'Still no tidings of your starting, and it grows colder and colder! Nevertheless, important events are pressing on here, and we are in all manner of perplexities, in which your good advice would be extremely useful.

'To-day I will only tell you of the success of my expedition to Birmingham. You will have seen my address in *The Times* of the 23rd. It has met with great success, and attracted much notice; I hope also for your approval, which I care for much more than for that of our unsophisticated public.[4] Not to scatter incense for myself, but to give you pleasure, I send you the leading article of the *Herald*, a paper which, together with the *Advertiser* and the *Daily News*, was particularly *hostile* to me. The *Post*, *Morning Chronicle*, *Globe*, *Spectator*, *Economist*, &c., contain articles equally complimentary.

'We expect the King of Sardinia on Friday for a week, are busy with the preparations, and have a hard week's work before us. The King has made a most unfortunate selection of the season for his visit!'

The 'pressing events' to which the Prince alludes in this letter were, first, the fact, that Austria had recently formulated certain proposals for peace, which she proposed sending to St. Petersburg, by way of ultimatum, with the intimation that, if not accepted, she would break off her diplomatic relations with Russia, and, next, the circumstances under which these proposals had been brought before the English Government. These were anything but satisfactory. The representatives of France and Austria had concerted the terms to be submitted to Russia, without concert with England, and they had then been sent to our Government by Count Walewski, with an urgent request that we should adopt them as they stood. The proposals, in their general scope, were such as we could not with propriety refuse to entertain; but when they came to be examined, certain modifications presented themselves to our Government as essential. On these being communicated to Count Walewski, they were received in a spirit akin to that in which an arrangement so vital to England had been come to without even asking her opinion. The Austrian proposals, we were told, must be accepted, as presented to us, and no modifications of them could be entertained. Against such treatment it became necessary to protest, and Count Walewski had to be told in diplomatic language, that in this matter England was a principal, and not a mere political and diplomatic contingent.

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[4] This was the Baron's verdict:—'The speech at Birmingham has pleased me very much. It seems to me to touch on every essential point. *The Times* has despatched it sneeringly. Never mind!'

The communications between the representatives of the two countries had grown somewhat warm; Lord Palmerston had even gone the length of writing to Count Walewski (21st of November), that, rather than be dragged into signing a peace on unsatisfactory terms, England would prefer to continue the war with no other ally than Turkey, and that she felt herself quite competent to sustain the burden thus cast upon her. Things were in this critical state, when the Emperor of the French, believing probably that the only way to a true understanding with his ally was to take the matter into his own hands, addressed the letter to the Queen, of which the following is a translation:—

'Tuileries, 22nd November, 1855.

'Madam and dear Sister,—I received the Duke of Cambridge with great pleasure, both because he is so near of kin to Your Majesty, and because I have long had occasion to know all his good qualities.[5] I have been greatly touched by your letter, of which he was the bearer. Nothing could please me more than to know that the remembrance of Your Majesty's visit to us has not yet been effaced from your memory.

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[5] The Duke had gone to Paris to attend the ceremony of closing the Great Exhibition there.

'We have reached one of those critical epochs, when we ought to speak very frankly; and I would therefore ask Your Majesty's permission to enter into some detail upon the subject of what is taking place in the political world.

'I begin by repelling everything which could lead to the belief, that the French Government would be constrained to make peace, although the conditions were not good, just as I would not permit myself to think that the English Government would be compelled to continue the war, if the conditions of peace were good. We are both of us free in our actions, we have the same interests, and we wish the same thing—an honourable peace!

'Now, what is our military position? Your Majesty has, I believe, in the East, 50,000 men, and 10,000 horses. I have 200,000 men and 34,000 horses. Your Majesty has an immense fleet in the Black Sea as well as in the Baltic; I have one that is imposing, though less considerable. Well, notwithstanding this formidable force, it is apparent to all the world, that although we can do Russia serious mischief, we cannot *subdue* her with our own unaided means. What then is to be done? Three courses are open to us.

'1. To limit ourselves to occupying strategical points, to blockade the Black Sea and the Baltic, and to wait without spending extravagant sums until it pleases Russia to make peace. By confining ourselves to a defensive war, and to holding our ground, Russia will be exhausted in warlike preparations (*s'épuise en armements*), while we, on the other hand, will be diminishing the sacrifices of war.

'2. To make an appeal to all the nationalities, to proclaim boldly the re-establishment of Poland, the independence of Finland, of Hungary, of Italy, and of Circassia. This course, I need scarcely say, would be full of danger, and contrary at this time of day to justice.

'3. To secure, if possible, the alliance of Austria, so as that she may carry all Germany along with her, and in this way that Russia may be driven, by our arms on the one hand, and by the public opinion of Europe on the other, to propose equitable conditions of peace.

'It will seem, I doubt not, to Your Majesty, as it does to me, that the third course is the best.

'Now, what is going on at this moment?

'Austria says to us, "The proposals of peace, which before Europe you have proclaimed to be sufficient for your interests and your honour, I accept, nay I am prepared even to submit them on the condition that, if Russia shall by any chance entertain them, you give me your assurance, that you will consent to open negotiations for peace on this basis." To such an offer, how can we reasonably reply by a refusal, or by equivocations (*chicanes*) which are equivalent to a refusal? This, Madam, is what I cannot understand, for it is not we who make concessions to gain the support of Austria; it is Austria who of her own accord hoists our flag.

'If Your Majesty's Government said that the conditions of peace ought to be very different, that our honour and our interests demanded a readjustment of the map of Europe, that Europe would not be free until Poland was re-established, the Crimea given to Turkey, and Finland to Sweden, I could comprehend a policy which would have a certain grandeur, and would put the results aimed at on a level with the sacrifices to be made. But spontaneously to renounce the support of Austria for microscopical advantages, which one could always claim at any time, is what I cannot bring myself to regard as reasonable, and to these questions, so grave as they are, I ask the attention of Your Majesty and that of Prince Albert, whose views are always so clear and so exalted.

'My firm desire being to be always at one with Your Majesty's Government, I hope we shall come to an understanding.

'I ask your pardon for this letter, written in haste, and I beg you to receive favourably the fresh expression of the respectful and tender friendship, with which I am,

'Madam and dear Sister,
'Your Majesty's devoted and true brother,
'NAPOLEON.'

On receiving this letter the Queen sent for Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon, and laid it before them. The sketch of the reply to be returned to it had been prepared by the Queen in concert with the Prince. In very firm, but courteous, language, it recalled the Emperor's attention to the fact, that in negotiating peace the terms must be such as the British Nation, through her Parliament, would approve; and that a grave mistake had been committed by his Minister in settling, without our intervention, terms of peace to which we were expected to become parties. It also brought to his notice the unmeasured language of some of the Emperor's own officials, of which he was pretty certainly himself unaware, as to the necessity which France felt for bringing the war to a close. The natural candour of the Emperor's mind might be relied upon to take these remonstrances in good part. If convinced of their justice—and this he subsequently admitted himself to be—he was sure to go heartily with us in stipulating for the conditions which we considered essential to an honourable peace. To carry him along with us was all-important; for only in this way could we hope to checkmate the peace-at-any-price party in Paris, who were actively at work in the hope of endangering the

English alliance, and establishing those intimate relations with Russia which her agents were straining every nerve to negotiate. The letter, of which we now give the translation, met with the cordial approval of the Ministers, who felt how thoroughly it was calculated to effect the object in view :—

'26th November, 1855.

'Sire and dear Brother,—My cousin, the Duke of Cambridge, has come back to us deeply moved by the kindness of the reception given to him by Your Majesty, and by the confidence you have shown him. Most sincerely do I thank your Majesty, to whom he has been a fresh medium for the conveyance of my sentiments. The ceremony of closing the Exhibition, at which he was present, filled him with admiration, and the lively description of it which he gave me, inspired me with but one regret, namely, that I was not able to be there myself.

'Your Majesty's letter has given me the greatest satisfaction, as at once a fresh proof of your friendship and of your sincere desire in all difficult moments to come to a clear understanding with me by a frank and unreserved interchange of opinions. I am animated by the same feeling, and pleased to find that there is in fact no material difference between your views and my own. We both wish for a good and honourable peace, and you are quite right in saying that you are no more constrained to accept a bad peace, than I to refuse a good one. But to discover and understand the nature of that which may have the *semblance* of a difference of opinion, it is essential to form a just idea of the *difference of position* of our two Governments, which must naturally influence their decisions and actions. It is only by taking this difference into full account that we can judge each other with perfect justice and fairness.

'Your Majesty has great advantages over me in the mode of conducting your policy and your negotiations. You are answerable to nobody, you can keep your own counsel, employ in your negotiations whatever person or form you choose, you can alter your course when you please, or give, by a word spoken by yourself at any time, that direction to public affairs which strikes you at the moment as the most advantageous.

'I, on the other hand, am bound by certain rules and usages; I have no uncontrolled power of decision; I must adopt the advice of a Council of responsible Ministers, and these Ministers have to meet and to agree on a course of action after having arrived at a *joint conviction* of its justice and utility. They have at the same time to take care that the steps which they wish to take are not only in accordance with the best interests of the country, but also such, that they can be explained to and defended in Parliament, and that their fitness may be brought home to the conviction of the nation.

'There is, however, another side to this picture, in which I consider that I have an advantage which Your Majesty has not. Your policy runs the risk of remaining unsupported by the nation, and the irresistible conviction that your people will not follow it to the end, may expose you to the dangerous alternative of either having to impose it upon them against their will, or of having suddenly to alter your course abroad, and even perhaps to encounter grave resistance. I, on the other hand, can allow my policy free scope to work out its own consequences, certain of the steady and consistent support of my people, who, having had a share in determining my policy, feel themselves to be identified with it.

'The advantages and disadvantages inherent in our respective positions, are very apparent at this "critical epoch," and in them lie the difficulties which we have to overcome. If they are well understood, however, and well appreciated on both sides, it ought not to be difficult to arrive at a judicious solution, while paying at the same time due regard to our respective positions.

'I make, then, full allowance for Your Majesty's personal difficulties, and refuse to listen to any wounded feelings of *amour propre* which my Government might be supposed to entertain at a complete understanding having been come to with Austria—an understanding which has resulted in an arrangement being placed, cut and dry before us, for our mere acceptance, putting us in the disagreeable position of either having to accept what we have not even been allowed fully to understand (and which, so far as Austria is concerned, has been negotiated under influences, dictated by motives, and in a spirit which we are without the means of estimating), or to take the responsibility of breaking up this arrangement, of losing the alliance which is offered to us and which is so much wanted, and even of estranging the friendly feelings of the ally who advocates the arrangement itself.

'Passing over all these considerations, I am sincerely anxious to be at one with Your Majesty. All that is required to enable my Government to do so, is: 1st. That we should not be bound to the letter of the proposal, of which we have had no opportunity of discussing the meaning or the import. 2nd. That Austria should agree to abide, under all circumstances, by her Ultimatum, and not to bring us back counter-proposals from St. Petersburg, which we, yourself and I, should have to accept or to refuse, whereby we should be placed again in the same bad position we found ourselves in last year.

'3rd. That the Neutralisation Treaty[6] should be made a reality and not something merely illusory, which it would inevitably be, if, as proposed, it were left as a separate treaty existing merely between Russia and Turkey.

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[6] That is, the conditions for the neutralisation of the Black Sea, on which the Conferences at Vienna had broken down. This was the most essential of the modifications proposed by our Government on the Austrian Ultimatum, and it was subsequently adopted by both France and Austria.

'I am convinced Your Majesty will find these demands founded in reason! On your part, be equally assured, that having given my assent to these conditions, I will not allow them to be neutralised by anything which you could fairly designate as "*chicanes équivalentes à un refus*," or a desire to fight for "microscopical advantages." What I ask for is inspired by the common interest which we both have in view, and I can see nothing in it to which Austria can raise any fair objection.

'I cannot, however, conceal from Your Majesty my fears, founded upon information on which I can rely, that the language held at Paris, by men in office and others who have the honour to approach you, in regard to the financial difficulties of France, and the absolute necessity of concluding peace, has already produced a very mischievous effect at Vienna, at Berlin, and at St. Petersburg; and that it is very possible that Austria may by this time be disposed to draw back from her Ultimatum, and to seek to obtain more favourable terms for Russia.

'I now proceed to consider the three courses mentioned by Your Majesty as open to us. I am glad to see that Your Majesty rejects the first, which, in my opinion, would not realise even what it professes to attain, because Russia would take care not to "*s'épuiser en armements*," if she were sure that the Western Powers would confine themselves to a mere blockade, and, as we have entered upon an aggressive war, we could not now return to a merely defensive one, without owning at least a moral defeat.

'The second course would at all times have been repelled by me with the same firmness with which it is rejected by Your Majesty, and for the same reasons and the same considerations.

'The third, to which Your Majesty gives the preference, has also my unqualified approval, but I do not disguise from myself the uncertainty of its chances of success, as this is dependent on the decision of other Powers, who may have other notions of their own interest, and who have hitherto done little to inspire us with any confidence. Be this as it may, I promise Your Majesty to do my utmost to make this course succeed, and I agree fully with you, that all minor considerations should be dropped in order to arrive at the greater result.

'I will say nothing here of the plans of military operation, as I consider them to be dependent on the policy agreed upon. This policy having been settled exclusively by the two Governments, the Generals, after a Council, of which I highly approve the idea as suggested by Your Majesty, should be entrusted with the consideration of the plans of the campaign to carry out the policy determined upon.

'I am convinced that every difficulty, every divergence of opinion, which may arise on these weighty matters, will be more promptly and more effectually dispelled by a frank exchange of ideas between Your Majesty and myself, than by any other mode of communication, and I therefore beg you will continue towards me those unreserved utterances (*épanchements*), to which I hope you will find that my letter responds with a sincere and genuine confidence. The Prince feels more and more the flattering opinion you have been pleased to express with respect to his views and judgment. No one, I am happy to say, is more keenly anxious than he for the success of the ideas which I hold in common with yourself, or supports more resolutely whatever can conduce to their fulfilment.

'I would have wished, had time allowed, to abridge this letter, the extreme length of which is, however, justified by the gravity of the circumstances and the importance of the questions at issue.

'Accept, Sire, the expression of sincere friendship and of high esteem, with which I am, Sire and dear Brother,

'Your Majesty's very affectionate
'Sister and friend,
'VICTORIA.'[7]

The Emperor of the French was much gratified by this letter. He frankly admitted our right to take exception to the way the terms of the Ultimatum had been settled without previous consultation with the English Government, as well as the importance of some of the modifications we had suggested, and which had been represented to him as insignificant and of 'microscopical' value. The information, hinted at in the letter, and more fully brought to his notice by our Ambassador at Paris, as to the efforts which were everywhere being made to have it supposed that France was ready for peace on any terms, caused him the deepest annoyance, and he took means to let it be known, that, however this note might be sounded for the purposes of the Bourse, he would be no party to a peace of which England did not approve. If the war had to be carried on, France would not be found backward. 'Be assured,' were his words to Lord Cowley (25th of November), 'whatever I think right, I will do, and I shall not be afraid of making my conduct understood in France.' Not for the first time, he found his best advice had come from England. In the same conversation he said, that all he begged was that the truth might be told him, and we should find him as ready to do what he could to smooth away our difficulties as we were to smooth away his.

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[7] The original of this letter, and of that to which it is an answer, will be ound in the Appendix.

CHAPTER LXIX.

On the 30th of November the King of Sardinia arrived in London on a visit to the Queen. He was met by the Prince at the railway station, and in passing through London on his way to Windsor Castle was received with a cordiality, which, if not so demonstrative as that with which the Emperor and Empress of the French had been greeted, was sufficient to show how warmly the English people appreciated the gallant spirit in which he had thrown himself into the struggle against Russia. The visit was a short one, but the mass of things to be seen and done imposed no small amount of fatigue upon the Queen and Prince.

Next day they accompanied him to the Arsenal, at Woolwich, and the scale of the operations there must have convinced His Majesty, that it would be from no lack of the materials of deadly warfare, if his English Allies were now to consent to a cessation of hostilities, and that they were not likely to give such a consent, except in exchange for satisfactory terms of peace. The hospitals were also visited, kind words were exchanged with the sufferers there, and a series of manœuvres by the Artillery on the Common gave actual proof of our pre-eminence in that arm, of which the Royal soldier had often heard. The following day (Sunday) was spent by the King in London; but by daybreak the next morning His Majesty was on his way to Portsmouth, accompanied by Prince Albert. The dockyard and factories there were thoroughly examined, and a visit was made in the *Fairy* to inspect a portion of the Fleet at Spithead, consisting of eight ships of the line and eight frigates. On the 4th the King went to London, and after receiving the *Corps diplomatique* at Buckingham Palace, proceeded in state to the City, where about 2,000 guests had assembled at the Guildhall to witness the ceremonial of presenting an address by the Corporation. The King had been welcomed by great numbers on his way to the City, although the day was cold, dark, and wet; but the scene, as he entered the hall, and the crowds assembled there rose in a body and received him with prolonged cheers, was especially gratifying and impressive. It was one which was to be witnessed only in England, among a people sure of its own liberties, and predisposed in favour of a Sovereign who had proved himself true to the principles of constitutional monarchy. Count Cavour was in attendance upon the King, and the reply to the Address was such as might have been expected from the pen of a statesman so liberal, so far-seeing, and so accomplished. Both address and reply were useful at the time, from the resolute tone with which they declared that the Allies would not lay down their arms until an honourable and durable peace had been secured. On his return from the City the Prince was enabled to give the King the welcome assurance that France had adopted our modifications of the proposed Austrian Ultimatum, and that all diplomatic difficulty on this ground was now at an end.

The next day His Majesty was invested by the Queen with the Order of the Garter, and a great banquet in the evening brought his brief but busy visit to a close. He was to leave Windsor Castle next morning at five o'clock. Even before this hour the Queen was present to take leave of the Royal guest. The morning was bitterly cold, and heavy snow was falling, as he left the Castle for Folkestone, accompanied by the Prince, the Duke of Cambridge, and Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar. After seeing the King depart for Boulogne at nine o'clock, the Prince returned to the hotel, where he met the Duke of Newcastle, who had just landed from the packet on his way back from the East. The meeting was a pleasant surprise, and the details as to the state of affairs in Asia Minor and the Crimea, which the Prince was able to gather from him in their brief interview, made even the fatigue and cold of that bitter morning for the time forgotten. There was still work to be done before the Prince could return to town. Colours were to be presented at Shorncliffe to two of the regiments of the Royal German Legion, who were on the point of embarking for the Crimea.

The Prince, on horseback and escorted by a troop of the German light cavalry, reached the ground about eleven o'clock. Despite the inclemency of the weather, a large number of visitors—many of them ladies—had assembled. The steadiness and precision with which the regiments went through the movements common on such occasions promised well for their efficiency in the field. To the Prince the ceremony was especially interesting both as a German, and as having been himself the first to suggest the raising of this foreign auxiliary force. They, on the other hand, no doubt, attached a double value to the few admirably chosen words of the Prince's speech in presenting the colours by reason of their being addressed to them in their own language by one whom Germans had long since learned to honour.

> 'I am heartily glad,' said the Prince, 'at being able to deliver these colours to you in person, as this gives me an opportunity of expressing to you, how warmly the Queen recognises the readiness with which you have responded to her call, and enrolled yourselves in her army.
>
> 'I am fully convinced that you will, under all circumstances,

uphold the honour of a flag, which until now has been victorious in every quarter of the globe in the battle for Justice, Order, Freedom, and the spread of Civilisation.

'May the Almighty accompany you with His protecting grace in all the toils and dangers which you have valiantly resolved to share with the brave English army! They will, I feel sure, welcome you as brothers.'

After lunching with the officers, the Prince returned to Windsor Castle, which he reached about five o'clock, and where a few quiet days, after the fatigues of the preceding week, were peculiarly welcome.

The agencies at work in Russian interests at Paris had such ready means of access to some of the leading officials there, that the fact of Austria's intention to submit an Ultimatum to the Czar, which had received the sanction of the Allied Powers, was not likely to be any secret at St. Petersburg. Russia wanted peace, because she knew that her powers of resistance were well nigh exhausted, but to accept a peace at the dictation of Austria was a mortification not to be borne, if by any means it might be averted. Accordingly Prince Gortschakoff found means to make the Emperor of the French aware that he knew what was going on —that Russia would accept no Ultimatum, whatever might be its terms, as a basis for peace,—but that if the Emperor really wished for peace he should send a confidential agent to Prince Gortschakoff, and His Majesty would then learn on what terms it could be made. A few days later the French Government was sounded on the same subject by Baron Seebach, the Saxon Minister at Paris, who professed to be, as he no doubt was, acting on the instructions of the Emperor of Russia. The Emperor of the French would not entertain the question, except in concert with England; and Baron Seebach was asked to place his propositions in writing, that they might be submitted to the English Government.

He did so, but after what had already occurred in regard to the limitation of the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea, the suggestion which he put forward on this the turning point of any negotiations could meet only with a decided negative. What this suggestion was may be inferred from the following passage in a letter from the Queen (13th December) to Lord Clarendon:—'Baron Seebach's proposal is really too "naïf." The Straits are to be closed and every flag excluded from the Black Sea except the Russian and Turkish, who will settle together what they think right, and this is to be the satisfactory solution of the third point, upon which Russia will be prepared to sign preliminaries!'

All these indirect endeavours of Russia to separate France from England, and to come to terms with the one, which she might then hope to force upon the other, were brought to a close by a settlement of the terms of the Austrian Ultimatum, and its despatch to St. Petersburg on the 15th of December. Any hopes which might have been raised there by the rumour of a variance which for a time existed between France and England as to the terms of the Ultimatum were thus nipped in the bud. Nor was this all, for Baron Seebach was made aware from a quarter where mistake was impossible, that this variance was absolutely and entirely at an end, and that the Emperor of the French now considered the terms of the Ultimatum as entirely his own. He was prepared either to make peace upon them if accepted without modification by Russia, or to continue the war with increased vigour. But, happen what might, nothing would induce him to separate from England, and any calculations founded upon the alliance being broken up or weakened would prove to be utterly delusive. This information must have reached St. Petersburg soon after the arrival there of Count Esterhazy as the bearer of the Austrian Ultimatum, with instructions, unless a favourable answer were returned within a limited time, to demand passports for himself and the whole of the Austrian Mission.

Thanks to the loyalty and frankness of the French Emperor, what for a time threatened to prove a serious difficulty was thus effectively removed. How serious it was may be gathered from the words of the Prince in writing to Baron Stockmar on the 3rd of December. 'In politics,' he wrote, 'there is much danger; Austrian propositions, which, as they send up the funds, are acceptable to the French Ministry, but are full of mischievous consequences to us. . . .'

The Court had gone to Osborne for a fortnight on the 10th of December, and there the Prince received the following letter from Baron Stockmar, in answer to that from which we have just quoted:—

'I am glad for the Queen's sake and your own, that the recent visits and other fatigues are well over, and that you are once more settled in the quietude of Osborne, for great and protracted distraction evaporates, sometimes uselessly, sometimes injuriously, the best faculties both of heart and head.

'For a due appreciation and accurate estimate of the political constellations of the hour and of what they menace, I am here entirely without adequate materials. As your Royal Highness remembers, I anticipated from the first, that the chief danger for the political enterprise of the Western Powers lay in the difficulty of making it possible for France and England to act, and to the end, like loyal comrades,

Who with close-compacted power
  Bravely stand together,
In success's sunny hour,
  And in stormy weather.

'Well, the imbecility of Prussian policy is not so likely to endanger this "brave standing together" as the Austrian

Minister's inability to pursue a sound general and special policy; for what could I expect from men who suffered themselves to be duped by Jesuitism in the year of grace 1855?'

The allusion here is to the Concordat between the Pope and the Emperor of Austria of the 18th of August, 1855, which the Prince has designated in the copy preserved among his papers by one word, "Atrocious!" By that document greater rights and privileges within the Austrian Empire had been conceded than the Papal See had ever been able, in the days of its greatest power, to extort from any German Sovereign. It made the conscience, the education, and the religious guidance of the Empire wholly subservient to the dictates of Rome, and pledged the civil authority to enforce whatever the Vatican might enjoin. The letter proceeds:—

'I fear we shall have to expiate this folly, even although eventually it may bear good fruit.[1] Has your Royal Highness considered the import of this affair in all its bearings? It has engaged my close attention ever since it was known.

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[1] This Concordat has now been practically abrogated. In 1867 after Sadowa the first step in this direction was taken by the passing of measures (1) which emancipated the schools from the control of the clergy; (2) which made marriage a civil rite, and sanctioned divorce on certain specified grounds; and (3) which defined the relations of the different religious denominations to each other. These measures encountered the strongest opposition from the Roman Catholic clergy, but they were passed by triumphant majorities in the Reichsrath. Again in May 1868 further laws were passed which withdrew both marriage and education from ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Marriage was made matter of civil contract, and the State schools were thrown open to all without distinction of creed. The last vestiges of the Concordat were swept away by measures introduced by Prince Auersperg into the Reichsrath in January 1874, for the regulation of the relations between Church and State. These had been provoked by the action of the Ultramontane party, and they placed the Roman Catholic Church, as to all but its purely spiritual functions, under the control of the State. The appointment of priests was made subject to the sanction of Government, who might, under certain conditions, demand their dismissal. The limits of spiritual authority to be exercised by the priests

The discussions upon it, which I have seen in *The Times*, were utterly superficial, and in part mistaken! I hope in a few days to be able to send you some remarks, which have been written with a view to a more thorough understanding of the subject. The purport of them is to call the attention of the legislature from the juridical point of view to the immediate consequences. . . . The affair will become very serious, for to expect self-control, forbearance, and moderation from the Roman Catholic, or indeed from any, clergy is idle.

'For the present my notion is, that that section of the belligerents, which has the heaviest purse and can longest dispense with economy, is most likely to get peace concluded according to its wish. The political pressure from without and within will indeed prevent the Russians from thinking of the cost so long as they have a rouble to spend; but they certainly seem to have become fully aware, that, in challenging France and England as they did, they greatly over-estimated their own power.

'What ought I to think of the rumour, that St. Petersburg and Moscow are to be fortified? Is Russia afraid that a change may take place in the policy of Sweden? . . .

'15th December, 1855.'

Before this letter reached the Prince, the conditions of the Austrian Ultimatum were practically settled; but until the answer of Russia was known, it was intended that profound secrecy as to its terms should be preserved. Accordingly,

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were defined; rules were laid down for the education and training of candidates for the priesthood; the rights of ecclesiastical bodies, of congregations, and of patrons were dealt with, and provision made for the proper appropriation of endowments; monastic bodies were brought under the direct surveillance of the civil authority; clerical endowments were subjected to taxation, and the existence of separate religious bodies recognised. Thus out of evil came good, for the reaction against ecclesiastical control, which grew out of the Concordat, accelerated the establishment of religious freedom in Austria, and realised the anticipation expressed by Baron Stockmar in the text even in writing to Baron Stockmar on the 17th, the Prince, while preparing him to hear important news in a few days, gives no clue to their nature. He writes:—

'I have little news for you from our quiet retreat in Osborne. In the politics of Europe a turn is likely to take place, which will be favourable in every sense to the Western Powers, but must place Prussia in a fresh and most serious difficulty. A few weeks, or perhaps days, will put the world in possession of the secret, which in the absence of a courier I cannot confide to you through the post. Prussia in her blindness is playing a terribly hazardous game, and the confusion in her domestic affairs must have reached its climax. Oh, that you were here, that I might talk over these topics with you!'

A few days brought the Baron's promised remarks on the Papal Concordat with Austria. Acknowledging their receipt on the 31st of December, the Prince wrote: 'Your notes for the understanding of the Concordat have reached us. I had taken precisely the same view. I also should have nothing to say against it, were the Roman Catholic Church to show itself openly in its true colours, for then it would be recognised for what it truly is, and be abandoned by all rational men. But that the Government should have stooped to be the tool for executing its decrees, to become the despot of its people for the Church's ends, is monstrous, nay incomprehensible! . . . .'

In the same letter the Prince adverts to a series of bitter attacks against himself, which had just been made by *The Times* in consequence of his having signed a Memorial to the Queen by the officers of the Guards, in which they complained of an injustice to their body caused by the operation of a Royal Warrant issued on the 6th of October, 1854, for the regulation of promotion and retirement in the army. The object of that Warrant had been to enable lieutenant-colonels, after three years' service, in actual command of a battalion, to become, by right, full colonels, and thus, while still young, to take their turn in a brevet as major-generals. The operation of the Warrant was, however, confined to the officers of the Line, and in this way an injustice was alleged to have been done, unintentionally, to the officers of the Guards. They therefore memorialised Her Majesty with the hope of getting it redressed, and their promotion put upon the same footing as that of their comrades of the Line.

Prince Albert, as Colonel of the Grenadier Guards, had appended his name to this Memorial. This innocent act was made the text for several articles charging him with having made use of his exalted position to exercise an undue influence at the Horse Guards, and his conduct in the present case was adduced in illustration of the writer's views. There was not then, nor at any time, the shadow of a foundation for the charge; but by the necessities of his position, which imposed silence upon him, the Prince was without the means of defence. The writer was therefore safe from contradiction when he reminded the public—it now knows with what truth—that the Prince had coveted the office of Commander-in-Chief, and had only abandoned this ambition in deference to the 'less courtly but sounder counsels' of those Mentors of the press, of whom his present assailant claimed to be one. But while the Prince had so far deferred to these counsels, his conduct, the writer went on to say, had given rise to the 'general assertion that he exercised much influence in military matters, even as respects the highest military appointments,'—an assertion which had been refuted in the most unqualified terms in the House of Lords by Lord Hardinge on the 31st of January, 1854. It was natural, the writer admitted, that the Prince's brother officers should petition the Queen,—which by the rules of the service, however, he forgot to mention that they could not do, except through him as their superior officer; but it was intolerable that the Queen should be 'placed in the ungracious position of refusing the prayer of one who ought to be careful how he sues, where he should not sue in vain,' inasmuch as his name to the petition 'gave a force to the prayer, which almost converted it into a command!' It was further urged in aggravation of the Prince's offence, that the memorial had been 'drawn up, signed, and presented in secrecy,' thus showing 'that its originators were desirous of gaining their object by means of powerful influence quietly brought into action.'

How little the author of these attacks understood either the Queen or the Prince, or their undeviating deference to the counsels of their responsible advisers in military, as well as in all other matters, it is unnecessary to say. The Prince's action in reference to the subject of the Memorial began and ended with his signing it.[2] So he was content to bear these imputations of his anonymous accuser in silence as he had done so many others, and only in writing to Baron Stockmar did he even think them worthy of a word of notice. To him he said:—

'You will have read violent attacks upon me on account of the Guards' Memorial. That you may understand the matter, just one word. Every free Briton has the right of petition to his Sovereign; the officers of a corps can only petition through their commanding officers and superiors. If I had declined to annex my name to the petition, I should have barred the Guards from their right, and this out of personal cowardice. A public petition through a Secretary of State is no secret intrigue of a husband with his wife.'

The Prince had grown to be indifferent to the attacks of the press upon himself, but we find many indications in his correspondence at this time of the pain it cost him to see, how the reckless misrepresentations as to the state of our army had come to be accepted abroad as actual facts, justifying the belief that our greatness as a nation was at an end. Official despatches, as well as his own correspondence, told too plainly how widely this belief was spread, and the mischief it was doing at a time when, if ever, it was important that the Continental Powers should know that England had not lost the vigour of her arm. One of the imputations against our officers was, that they were leaving the Crimea in great numbers on the pretext of private business, and so proving their unfitness for the position in which they had been placed by what was being continually denounced as an incurably vicious army system. The present Emperor of Germany, in a letter to the Prince, had spoken as he might be expected to speak of such conduct, assuming it to be true. His remarks drew from the Prince the following reply (30th December, 1855):—

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[2] The prayer of the Memorial was not granted, the Secretary of State for War not having been persuaded by the reasons on which it was based.

'An illustration of what I have said as to the recklessness of the press is given by the very circumstance to which you advert in your letter, where, among other calumnies, which in the eyes of the Continent have made our army a by-word and a shame, you speak of the bad impression produced by the coming away of so many officers from the seat of war "for urgent private affairs." I begged Lord Hardinge to sift this matter to the bottom, and you will scarcely believe me, when I tell you as the result of the inquiry, that, exclusive of the officers who have come back by reason of wounds, sickness, or promotion to the depôt battalions, only thirty-three out of an army of 52,000 men have come home on account of private affairs.

'How little,' the Prince adds, 'the real power of our press and its value can be known or judged of upon the Continent, is shown by the following facts. While it goes on disparaging the army in the most unmeasured terms, attacking the "aristocratic, ignorant, used-up, &c. officers," and "stupid, old, useless generals," and giving the Continent the impression that this is the opinion of the country, there is not a lieutenant comes back to his parents from the seat of war that is not greeted with cheers by the whole population of the place, his horses taken out, and the "hero" borne in triumph through the streets. Not a general returns, but a sword of honour and addresses are presented to him by the great towns. In France, on the contrary, where nothing but praise and honour is paid to the pre-eminence of the army, which, because this is so, finds this pre-eminence acknowledged in other countries, General Bosquet recently landed at Marseilles wounded, and was received by the assembled crowd with scarcely a sign of respect. But we must take the good and the bad together of a popular life which knows no limits to its freedom.'

So widely had the exaggerated statements as to the decay of our military force in Parliament and the press found credence, that even King Leopold seems to have thought that it would be politic in England to conclude a peace with Russia upon easy terms. He was aware of the Czar's desire for peace, and seems to have been anxious to assist him to effect it. But he clearly did not know how little disposed England was to abate one jot of the demands which she had made up her mind to obtain, or to allow the fear of anything that Russia could do to influence her ultimate decision. It was well that the King should hear the truth on these points, and it was sure to reach St. Petersburg, if once it were well understood at Brussels. We may fairly presume that the Prince had this contingency in view when he wrote the following reply to a letter, in which the King had sounded him as to the terms of peace which England might be expected to entertain. In reading this letter, one feels that the old pupil in politics has now become his master's master!

'Dearest Uncle,—It is only to-day that I am able to reply to your kind letter of the 16th, sent by the courier, as our removal from Osborne has somewhat disordered our daily routine; but I now send you my warmest thanks for it.

'It is always of the highest importance to me to learn your views, especially at critical moments like the present. Still I regret to find, running through what you say, a certain bitterness against England, which it has deserved neither by its attitude towards Belgium or yourself, nor by the position which it has taken up in regard to the Eastern Question, a bitterness of which I am at a loss even to divine the cause. No one knows better than yourself, how the whole dispute arose; how forbearing we were towards the Emperor Nicholas, how reluctantly we were driven to extreme measures, with what domineering insolence Russia repelled every effort on our part to avoid the conflict; how zealously we laboured to maintain in all good faith the *commun accord* of the European Powers, who had pronounced against Russia as in the wrong, and not to be driven into an isolated alliance with France; how Prussia first, then Austria, left us in the lurch; how Russia found friends in every quarter of the Continent (Belgium not excepted); what sacrifices we made in men, money, commercial relations, &c., how from every side nothing but prophecies of disaster has reached us, how, finally, Russia herself rejected the proposals at the Vienna Conference, always building on the belief that the sacrifices we had to make, and the difficulties we had to encounter, would ultimately break down the Franco-English alliance, and how she worked for that end through every possible organ, on one hand trying to scare us and the world by talking of the ambitious designs of Louis Napoleon, of his invasion of England, and his raid across the Rhine; on the other, seeking to irritate the French public against us by insinuating that we were prosecuting purely English interests (because of India), and were making use of France as our tool, whose interests the Emperor was sacrificing to us for personal and dynastic purposes of his own![3]

'We are now engaged in the struggle, and up to this point, despite the numberless disadvantages to which our press has exposed us, we have held our ground in the face of the enemy, who has been beaten at all points, and, having begun the campaign with 24,000 men and 36 guns, and lost in it somewhere about 20,000 men, we are now in Sebastopol with 52,000 men and 96 guns; we have on the Bosphorus 6,000 men of the Foreign Legion, a Turkish contingent of 18,000 men at Kertch, and 15,000 men of our Sardinian Allies ready to act as part of our army, and thus we are in a position to take the field with 80,000 men independently of the French. England entertains neither an invincible hatred to Russia, nor a childish ambition of military glory. If, therefore, the war is continued, the reason must be sought in the circumstance, that, being a practical country, it aims at a practical result, for which it is fighting, and until that result is attained, will persist through good and evil report in valiantly making further sacrifices to carry on the war.

'Sad would it be, were England to show that fitfulness of purpose, which is visible, alas! every twenty-four hours in France, and which is due to the fickleness and frivolity of the nation, the stock-broking propensities (*Agiotagewesen*) of its public men (*Staatsleute*), and the temptation under which its ruler lives, to regard every phase of the political problem with reference to the influence it may have upon his personal position at home. On the failure of any assault upon a battery at Sebastopol, he was for evacuating the Crimea; after any little success over Russia he was for pushing forward to Moscow; either a disgraceful peace was to be concluded, or the border provinces of the Rhine to be invaded; Austria was to be bought over to the side of the Allies by promises of Prussian territory, or her Italian provinces were to be taken from her; no peace "*sans que la France ait eu un grand succès, qui est nécessaire à l'Empereur*," and as soon as a success was achieved, peace at once, "*pour en sortir avec la gloire exclusive*," &c.

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[3] One of the great complaints against Louis Philippe—how utterly unfounded history will in time disclose—was, that he was 'the Viceroy of England upon the Continent'—and Lamartine mentions this as one great cause of his unpopularity. The Emperor Louis Napoleon had to contend against the same charge throughout his reign, and especially during the Crimean War

'If we have difficulties of this kind to contend with daily, and I really believe there is not a single soul in France who ever gave himself the very smallest concern about the maintenance of the Turkish Empire, still this was and is for us the one unvarying object of the war, and if we keep France up to the mark, and place reliance in the personal good faith (*Ehrlichkeit*) of the Emperor, assuredly this is not "riding another man's horse with your own spurs,"[4] though it may suit the Russians to put it to the French in that light. In any case the object we have set to ourselves is not yet thoroughly secured; and up to this moment I have not seen, nor am I able to discover even the faintest indication, that Russia has abandoned her design upon the supremacy of the East, neither do I believe that she will give in until she is completely exhausted, and this may involve the exhaustion of the best part of Europe; unless, indeed, Europe should unite in deed as well as in words, and *dictate* what it is costing the Western Powers, whose territories lie so far away from Russia, so much trouble to *extort*. But up to this time any such line of action has been made impossible by the love and worship of Russia entertained by all the Continental governments, who look to that country and to the Jesuits as the only agents to make their people happy, and to preserve themselves against the Red Republic of Paris.

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[4] This phrase had been applied to our relation towards France by King Leopold, in the letter to which this is an answer.

'Russia will have to see and feel the nature of her present position, before we can hope she will concede a peace commensurate with the objects of the war. That she has not done so up to this time is shown by the fact that she has put the question plumply in Paris through Herr von Seebach, whether the Western Powers are ready to conclude peace on the basis of the Neutralisation of the Black Sea? this neutralisation being, as Russia understands it, "that the Dardanelles shall be closed, and that no ships of war shall henceforth enter the Black Sea, except those of Russia and Turkey (!!), which shall be maintained there in such numbers as the two neighbours shall agree between themselves, without a voice on the part of the other Powers." A very pretty outcome this would make to a two years' bloody war! It explains why Russian diplomacy just at present professes to have a preference for the principle of neutralisation to that of limitation.

'You put much the same question as Herr von Seebach, "Will England make peace on the footing of neutralisation?" To this it would be difficult for me to give a satisfactory answer, as what I have just told you shows how *elastic* such general expressions are. The fact, however, is, that Austria has laid before us a carefully formulated basis for peace, and although it did not come up to our wishes and was proposed by a Power which of late has been at pains to earn for itself our utter distrust, we have accepted it after long and patient deliberation and discussion with our Allies. It has now gone as an Austrian Ultimatum to St. Petersburg.

Russia, therefore, has it in her power to conclude a peace which is regarded by Austria (as by ourselves) as most equitable. We will now see what she will do, and what amount of truth there is in all that she has been saying. The transaction may be concluded in a few days, and Europe has an interest in its being brought to a settlement. I hope it may now rouse itself and try to work upon that section of the European world which has done the wrong, which began the war, and brought about such an amount of misery.

'So long as Europe does not do this, and Russia goes on flattering herself with the hope that she can undermine the Franco-English Alliance, and make the two Powers jealous of each other by dividing their views as to the conditions to be insisted on, so long will that peace which you most naturally desire be out of the question. Were this Alliance to be broken up, I need not say to you that there would be no longer any security for Europe, and for Belgium even less than for any other part of Europe.

'I know not whether I have succeeded in placing our position in a clear light before you. At any rate, my object has been to explain it so fully that you might thoroughly see it, as it seemed to me to be the object of your letter that I should do so as far as possible.

'Windsor Castle, 24th December, 1855.'

Nothing could show more clearly than this letter how thoroughly English at heart, in the best sense, the Prince had become. The tinge of bitterness against this country, which coloured the King of the Belgians' letter, due apparently to some dissatisfaction at the warmth with which the French alliance was cultivated, and to an impression that we were bent on prosecuting the war partly from a vindictive spirit against Russia, and partly in order to re-establish the damaged prestige of our army, seems to have wounded the Prince to the quick. The warmth of the feeling under which he wrote is visible on the face of the draft of his letter (obviously penned with great rapidity) in the unwonted tremulousness of the characters. *Et tu, Brute?* It was hard indeed that the spirit of the nation, and its attitude at this period of the struggle, should be so little appreciated by the Belgian King. He might certainly have remembered with what reluctance we embarked in that struggle, and that it was not in the nature of our people to continue the war one hour after the object was attained for which it had been begun. But that we should not end it one hour sooner, was no less certain, and this also he might have known. He no doubt thought we were weaker now than we were in 1854, and that this should make us moderate in our demands. The Prince knew that we were in fact stronger, and he felt convinced that our demands had never been otherwise than moderate.

In the King's language the Prince could hear the echo of the arguments for a peace on terms favourable to Russia, sedulously put in circulation by Russian agents, of which the Despatches from every court, including that of Paris, had for some weeks been transmitting the report to Lord Clarendon. They fell upon deaf ears in this country. We knew what we had been fighting for; we were resolved, and we believed we were in a position, to obtain it. The peace of Europe should not be again broken for at least a generation, if we could help it. The firmness of our language, the Prince knew, had baffled the attempts to induce the Emperor of the French to accept conditions less stringent than would satisfy us. The same firmness, he believed, and, as the result proved, rightly believed, would make Russia feel, that she must either accept the conditions of peace which were now in her hands, or meet us in a fresh campaign, which we had the strongest reason to believe she was in no position to undertake.

Hateful as war is, and must always be, to civilised men, severe as was the strain both in blood and treasure, which this war had imposed and was likely to impose upon us, no Ministry could have ventured to bring it to a close on terms less stringent than those which had been offered to Russia. Stringent they undoubtedly were, for they involved an acknowledgment of humbling defeat in the stipulations, that she should thenceforth erect no military or naval arsenals in the Black Sea, which was to be absolutely closed to vessels of war, and that she should consent to a rectification of her frontier with Turkey in Europe. This, Russia knew, involved the surrender of that part of Bessarabia which bordered the Danube, and in all her history Russia had never given back any territory which she had once appropriated.

With the knowledge possessed by the Allies of the feelings of Russia on both these points, they had no strong belief in a satisfactory issue to the step taken by Austria; and they continued to make their preparations as before for an effective renewal of the campaign in the spring of 1856. The Emperor of the French had suggested that a Council of War, to settle the course of action, should be held in Paris. Our Government concurring in the propriety of this step, named the Duke of Cambridge, Admiral Sir E. Lyons, Major-General Sir Harry Jones, Major-General Sir Richard Airey, and Rear-Admiral the Hon. R. Dundas, to represent England at the proposed Conference. Its first meeting was held at the Tuileries on the 10th of January, and was presided over by the Emperor in person; Lord Cowley being present as the English political representative. Prince Jérome Bonaparte and his son, Count Walewski, Marshal Vaillant, General Della Marmora, General Canrobert, Admirals Hamelin, Pénaud, Jurien de la Gravière, Generals Bosquet, Niel, and De Martimprey, and our Naval and Military Commissioners, were also present. The sittings were continued up to the 20th of January, and although profound secrecy was of course maintained as to what took place there, the fact that they were being held was no secret, and it must have impressed the friends of Russia in Paris with the conviction that the Allies were in earnest in the indifference which they avowed as to whether Russia should accept the Austrian Ultimatum or not. Some words dropped by the Emperor of the French on the 29th of December in addressing the Imperial Guard, whom he had recalled from the Crimea, as he said, not because the war was over, 'but because it is only just to relieve in their turn the regiments which have suffered most,' were probably not without their effect in inducing some of the German Powers to represent at St. Petersburg the expediency of putting an end to the war. The Emperor had said, 'There is now in France a numerous and veteran army ready to show itself where circumstances may demand.' If then the war were to continue, circumstances, it was apparent, might demand that a stop should be put to the 'benevolent neutrality' of Prussia and some of the smaller States, for this had notoriously neutralised the effect of our blockade of the Baltic, and by encouraging Russian commerce, and maintaining the traffic in contraband of war, had enabled Russia to prolong the conflict.

The period limited for the reply to the Austrian Ultimatum was the 18th of January. Still trusting, apparently, to her friends in Paris, Russia made one more struggle to get the obnoxious stipulations struck out from the Austrian Ultimatum. Count Nesselrode submitted counter propositions with this view, and for a short time it was doubtful whether these might not have been entertained in Paris. Writing to Baron Stockmar on the 16th of January, the Prince says: 'Whether we shall have peace, and what kind of peace, or a continuation of the war, and of what kind, is at this moment hard to say. The elements are not the best; best of all is the good faith and loyalty (*Ehrlichkeit*) of Louis Napoleon towards us, of which he gives daily proofs.' He had just given proof of this by a direct personal communication with the English Government, and by deferring to their opinion, that the Russian modifications were inadmissible.

Before this fact could be known, the time for a Russian decision would have run out. But, on the 16th, the Queen and Prince had the satisfaction of hearing that the firmness of their Government had produced the result which, but for that firmness, would certainly not have been effected. By a telegram dated from Berlin at eight o'clock in the evening of that day, the King of Prussia, with an urgent request for secrecy, informed our Queen that he felt bound to inform her in all haste of the 'peace-teeming' (*Friedensschwanger*) contents of a telegram which had just reached him from St. Petersburg, announcing that Russia accepted the preliminaries of peace. It was midnight when this communication reached Windsor Castle. Next morning, the Prince sent it to Lord Clarendon with the following letter:—

'My dear Lord Clarendon—The King of Prussia's ways are unfathomable!

'The Queen received last night the enclosed *Friedensschwanger* telegraph! Although the King begs his name may remain concealed, the Queen thinks that it ought not to be so, from *you* at least, begging you not to divulge it further than the whole line of the telegraph may have done. If Russia has accepted the whole Ultimatum, as he pretends to know for certain, we have done wisely not to be in too great a hurry. The Queen wishes the telegraphic curiosity to be returned to her.

'Windsor Castle, 17th January, 1855.'

In reply to this letter, Lord Clarendon said:—

'The King of Prussia is certainly unable or unwilling to do things like other mortals, but I suppose that he hoped to be the first to communicate the news to the Queen, and thus to appear as having been instrumental in bringing about the Russian decision.

'The news is correct, as your Royal Highness will see by the accompanying telegrams' [from Sir H. Seymour, at Vienna] 'and letter from Count Colloredo, and the Emperor of Russia has certainly managed his affairs ill, for he has not only accepted the terms which he had previously declined, but he has done so under menace from Austria. He seems, however, to have accepted them as *a basis for peace negotiation*, and there may be an *arrière pensée* in this form which will require vigilance on our part, as the *tripotiers* of Paris will now be ready for anything. I understand that there is the greatest excitement in the City, and that the funds have gone up to 90.'

Referring to the remark by Lord Clarendon on the qualified language in which the Ultimatum was accepted, the Queen, in writing the same day to his lordship, adverts to the danger of allowing negotiations to be begun upon a vague basis, and presses the necessity for having the preliminaries signed before any further step was taken. If peace really ensued, good and well, although a better peace might have been obtained, had the war gone on. 'However,' Her Majesty adds, 'whatever happens, one consolation the Queen will ever have, which is, that with the one exception of the failure on the Redan, her noble army, in spite of every possible disadvantage which any army could labour under, has invariably been victorious; and the Russians have always and everywhere been beaten, excepting at Kars, where *famine alone* enabled them to succeed. Let us therefore not be (as alas! we have often been) its detractors by our croaking.'

The same day Lord Palmerston wrote to the Queen to congratulate Her Majesty upon the tidings of the Czar's decision:—

'So far, so well,' he added, 'and the success which has attended the firmness and steadiness of purpose in regard to those conditions may be looked upon as a tolerably sure indication that a perseverance in the same course will bring the Russian Government to consent to those remaining conditions which the Austrian Government has not yet (as it says) made known to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg.'

Lord Palmerston then adverts to the representations industriously circulated in Paris, as to the impossibility of the Emperor of the French continuing the war, owing to difficulties of finance, and the general desire for peace throughout the French nation. These he believed to be greatly exaggerated. He was convinced, he went on to say, that the Emperor of the French was perfectly master of his own position, and that he could, as to peace or war, take the course which he might determine to adopt. 'The cabal of stock-jobbing politicians by whom he is surrounded must give way to him if he is firm.' The finance difficulty could scarcely be real, when the last official statement in the *Moniteur* showed a reserve surplus of twenty millions, which was quite enough to meet the expenses of a spring campaign without having recourse to a fresh loan. The letter concluded thus:—

'Viscount Palmerston fully concurs in the sentiment of regret expressed by Your Majesty to Lord Clarendon, that the last action of the war, in which Your Majesty's troops have been engaged, should, if peace be now concluded, have been the repulse at the Redan; but, however it may suit national jealousy, which will always be found to exist on the other side of the Channel, to dwell upon that check, yet Your Majesty may rely upon it, that Alma and Inkermann have left recollections which will dwell in the memory of the living, and not be forgotten in the page of history, and although it would no doubt be gratifying to Your Majesty and the nation that another summer should have witnessed' the fulfilment of the measures contemplated for the next campaign, 'yet, if peace can now be concluded on conditions honourable and secure, it would, as Your Majesty justly observes, not be right to continue the war for the mere purposes of prospective victories. It will, however, be obviously necessary to continue active preparations for war up to the moment when a definitive Treaty of Peace is signed, in order that the Russians may not find it for their interest to break off negotiations, when the season for operations shall approach, emboldened by any relaxation on the part of the Allies induced by too ready a confidence in the good faith of their adversary.'

Lord Palmerston knew well that Russian diplomatists would use all their skill to neutralise the defeat they had been compelled by the adoption of the Austrian Ultimatum to admit. But neither he nor Lord Clarendon were men to sacrifice at the Council table the positions wrested from their adversary in the field. They were fully alive to the struggle which awaited them there, and they had some reason to apprehend they might have to fight it single-handed. But they had the courage and the skill for even that emergency. Both were put to the proof, and it will hereafter be seen that they came triumphantly out of the ordeal.

That the real difficulties of the negotiation for peace were now to begin, seems to have been the opinion of the Prince, as will be seen from the following letter to his friend at Coburg:—

'Russia has now accepted the entire Ultimatum. This step so completely resembles her acceptance of the Four Points without reserve last year, even after an Austrian menace, that we are naturally taken aback, and have made up our minds that some fresh deception is intended. As Prussia then hung back from taking part in the course taken by Austria, but when Russia accepted unconditionally, took credit for this to herself, and wished to be admitted into the Conference, so also now. The King has telegraphed the news direct to Victoria. "The King of Prussia to the Queen of England. Russia has accepted. I hasten to transmit the peace-teeming (*Friedensschwanger*) intelligence, certain that Your Majesty will unite with me in a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving for the grace of the Almighty. Pray keep my name a profound secret, &c.—FRIEDRICH WILHELM. International Telegraph Company, clerks, &c. 1*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.*!!"

'If Russia has it in contemplation to play us a trick, she is certain to do it this time upon the Fifth Point,[5] because it is upon that (as last year it was upon the third) that Austria has not come under obligation, and although it merely contains the requirement that Bomarsund shall not be fortified again, or converted into a Sebastopol, this will nevertheless be represented as a monstrous demand, and although it must operate for the protection of Germany, and of Prussia in particular, it is certain to be viewed by these very Governments as an injustice. The only other *ruse* open to them is Kars, which was not named in the Ultimatum, because at that time it was not in the Russians' hands. Now, as we have carried, and are still carrying on the war for the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, unless that fortress be restored, the war *must proceed*, which would quite please the whole *English* public. We are just beginning to get on our legs in a military point of view, and by March we shall have, united under our command in the Crimea, 60,000 English with 122 guns, 10,000 men of the Foreign Legion, 22,000 men of the Turkish Contingent, and 15,000 Sardinians. In France things are different: although the French have 150,000 men upon the spot, yet they wish the army away from there to the Rhine, "*parce que l'Alle-*

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[5] The Fifth Point was this:—'The belligerent Powers reserve to themselves the right which appertains to them to procure, in an European interest, special conditions over and above the four guarantees stipulated by the previous Articles.' England had wished to specify what it desired under this head, but Austria had failed, contrary to our anticipation, to do so.

magne ne tardera pas de subir son destin ordinaire de devenir le théâtre de la guerre," as French officers of high rank phrase it. The moneyed interest is desirous of *peace and enjoyments.* But with so volatile a people all this may be different by to-morrow. . . .

'If our fleet is well led, I believe in the destruction of Cronstadt and its fleet, and that St. Petersburg will be in danger of a similar fate. Should peace, however, ensue, I shall be heartily glad, though more for Germany's sake than for ours.'

'Windsor Castle, 24th January, 1856.'

CHAPTER LXX.

More than once in the course of our narrative we have had occasion to show that the relations of the Queen and Prince to the servants of the State were not merely official, but were coloured by the warm sympathies of personal friendship. Worn and worried as Lord Clarendon was with the anxieties which the management of the Foreign Office imposed upon him at this critical juncture, he had to encounter the affliction in his home of seeing a beloved mother gradually passing from the world. At such a time kind words from the Sovereign he served so well were sure to reach him—words eloquent of the deep personal interest in the welfare of those around them, by which the Queen and the Prince made service to them a work of love. Some such words had reached Lord Clarendon at the moment of his greatest grief, and in the same letter (12th January) in which he expresses his deep gratitude for Her Majesty's kindness, he adds: 'Your Majesty may rest assured that no affliction of his own could make Lord Clarendon unmindful of his duty to Your Majesty, and he trusts that the public business will not suffer from the calamity that has befallen him.'

The next morning brought tidings to the Palace of Mrs. Villiers' death, and the Queen wrote to Lord Clarendon as follows:—

'Windsor Castle, 13th January, 1856.

'The Queen has received Lord Clarendon's letter. It is with deep concern that we learn that the last sad scene is closed, and that Lord Clarendon has lost his beloved mother. Such a loss is one of those which can never be repaired. It is one of the links which is broken on earth; but at the same time one which, as it were, seems to connect us already with another and a better world.

'It must be a consolation in the midst of his grief for Lord Clarendon to think that the last days—indeed, the Queen believes, weeks—of his dear mother's life were spent in happiness under his roof, surrounded by his children, and cheered by the pride she must have felt in having a son, who rendered such invaluable services to his country and his Sovereign.'

These were no mere words of courtesy. They were prompted by regard for the statesman to whose friendship and sagacity the Queen and Prince knew by experience they could appeal with confidence in all circumstances of nicety and difficulty, and whose ability in his conduct of foreign affairs, since they had been under his charge, had been of no small importance in consolidating the alliance with France and Sardinia, and in bringing the great conflict in which we were engaged to the point at which Russia found it necessary to negotiate for peace.

In discussing the details by which the Austrian Ultimatum was to be carried out into a treaty of peace, a task still harder than any Lord Clarendon had yet performed was still before him. If anything could have nerved him for it, such a letter as the Queen's would have done so. Within the next three days came the news that Russia, contrary to expectation, had accepted the Ultimatum, and it then became necessary to determine where and by whom, on the part of England, the negotiations for peace should be conducted. On the 18th of January, Lord Clarendon placed his views on the subject before the Queen, in the following letter:—

'The choice of negotiators and the place of negotiation have for the last twenty-four hours been occupying the attention of Lord Clarendon, and he humbly ventures to say, that after much reflection he has reluctantly come to the conclusion that he ought to go himself. Lord Clarendon will not pretend to disguise that he is actuated in this solely by a sense of duty, as on many accounts it will be inconvenient and disagreeable to him, and he is convinced, that the higher the official position of the negotiator may be the more will be expected from him by the people of this country, and the more exclusively responsible he will be held for the terms in which peace is made. But no conditions, which are within the pale of possible attainment, *can* or *will*, Lord Clarendon is almost tempted to add *ought to*, satisfy the people of England, and the approaching Conference will therefore be the grave of the negotiator's reputation. Lord Clarendon, however, feels the immense gravity of the questions at issue, and that nobody has been in a position to follow them through all their various phases as he has been, and that Your Majesty has, therefore, a right to expect that such experience as Lord Clarendon may have gained should be devoted to the particular service in question. Lord Clarendon has likewise had the benefit of such frequent communications with Your Majesty and with the Prince upon every pending question, that he feels he could perhaps more accurately represent Your Majesty's views and wishes in a Conference than any other person in the Cabinet or the Diplomatic service. Lord Clarendon is therefore prepared, should Your Majesty desire it, to act as negotiator.

'Your Majesty will perhaps be surprised to hear, that Lord Clarendon, upon the whole, and after maturely weighing the advantages and the objections, has come to the opinion, that Paris would be the best place for the Conference. He thinks so—1st, because Lord Cowley could then act as one of the British negotiators, and, 2ndly, because an immediate and ready access could then always be had to the Emperor, whose intervention will constantly be required to control the French Plenipotentiaries, and prevent their aiding the Russians to defeat all the conditions which they have nominally accepted.

'It is true that Paris is the centre of Russian intrigue and the head-quarters of Russian agents, but this is of comparatively little importance, if we can keep the Emperor straight, for upon him will depend whether we have to fight the battle of principle and detail alone, or in conjunction with France, and we could not be so sure of his support, if Lord Cowley had only to make to him the communications he received from the British negotiator at Brussels or Frankfort, which would be forestalled by the telegraph and thwarted by his advisers . . . . The French generally would be pleased at Paris being selected. The Emperor could not but regard it as a proof of confidence in himself. Russia proposed it, and Austria would probably prefer Paris to any place, not Vienna.'

The Queen was delighted with Lord Clarendon's proposal. Next day she wrote to him to say so. 'All he has said as to the Conference,' Her Majesty added, 'is entirely shared by the Queen. Paris will be the preferable place, as the Emperor ought to be *sur les lieux*, if any good is to come of it; and Lord Clarendon will act as his Minister for Foreign Affairs, as well as the Queen's; and, she may add without hesitation, that he will find a more honest and sincere counsellor in Lord Clarendon than amongst his own advisers and so-called friends.'

On the 31st of January Parliament was opened by the Queen in person. Immense crowds assembled to greet Her Majesty on her way to and from Westminster, and the enthusiasm with which she was received showed that the interest of the nation in the question of war or peace remained unabated. The debates in both Houses fairly reflected the divided opinion of the country upon the subject of the peace, of which there seemed now to be a prospect. Only by those who had all along condemned the war was it regarded with unmixed satisfaction. The prevailing feeling was, that a better peace would be secured by continuing the war, which the country believed it was in a position to do with greater effect than before. The preparations for this were upon a gigantic scale; the country was prosperous, and the burden of the war was not greater than its finances could easily bear. Moreover, the national spirit would have been gratified by an opportunity being given to the Baltic Fleet to achieve, what it had hitherto failed, but which it was now understood to be able, to achieve, the destruction of Cronstadt; and it longed for a campaign, in which the army might show that its prowess was not to be measured by the failure of the attack on the Redan—an attack which some of our ablest Generals had declared no soldiers should ever have been called upon to make. But Mr. Disraeli spoke the mind of the more thoughtful part of the nation when he deprecated the continuance of the war for the sake of adding lustre to our arms. Our military fame, he said, had not been dimmed by the events of the war. It would not be easy for him to describe the immensity of the resources at our disposal, or the energy we had already displayed. But, he continued to say, it was monstrous, that nations should never engage in war unless they were sure to win great victories, that would figure among the decisive battles of the world. This would be to degrade us from the vindicators of public law to the gladiators of history.

The few well-timed and eloquent sentences in which Mr. Disraeli, amid the cheers of the House, alluded to the defence of Kars, spoke the sentiment of the nation.

> 'Let us at least,' he said, 'whether there be peace or whether there be war—let us express our admiration of those, who, although they may have been unfortunate, were not subdued—let us express our sympathy for an energy perhaps excessive, and for a courage which we know was unsupported—and at a moment, when we are called upon, and rightly called upon, to express our admiration of the great achievement, which has rendered the names of the Allies illustrious in the Black Sea—let us vindicate the conduct of those who, though not crowned with success, were at least crowned with glory in another place, and let us make our absent countrymen understand, that it is

the man who deserves, and not the man who achieves success, that is honoured by us.'

It was only to be expected of a statesman like Mr. Disraeli, that he should refrain from embarrassing by a word the Ministers on whom devolved the difficult duty of protecting the national interests and honour, in negotiating the terms of peace. How that duty was to be performed, he left those to decide who were responsible for its discharge. Such generosity among statesmen may always be counted upon as a matter of course. But he could scarcely have known how valuable to the Ministry at the time were the emphatic words with which he concluded his speech, in which he said that, if the negotiations failed, 'Her Majesty might appeal with confidence to her Parliament to support her in a renewed struggle; and there was no sum which Parliament would not cheerfully vote, or her people cheerfully raise, to vindicate her honour and maintain the independence and interests of her kingdom.'

In the House of Lords the same moderate spirit was not shown by Lord Derby in his speech on the Address: but the fiery rhetoric of 'the Rupert of Debate,' in which he charged the Ministry with being 'supplicants to Russia for peace,' gave an opportunity to Lord Clarendon to show how very far such a charge was from the truth. We had been by no means eager to accept the good offices of Austria; but when she was prepared on her own responsibility to submit terms to Russia, which we believed to be fair, it would have been incompatible with the duty of the Government to the country to refuse these good offices. Speaking of the terms of peace, he gave great credit to the Emperor of Russia for the moral courage he had shown in accepting conditions which were understood to be displeasing to the war party in Russia. But in these terms there was nothing to cast a stain on Russian honour.

'Russia must be aware,' said Lord Clarendon, 'that the aggressive policy which has been imputed to her is the cause of alarm and irritation to Europe, and that it will be resisted; and it is upon that account that she has been required and has consented to give guarantees for maintaining the independence of the Ottoman Empire. I say, there is no dishonour or degradation cast upon Russia by the acceptance of these terms: the only dishonour will be in the evasion of them.'

Reports had been industriously propagated in Paris, and at every court in Europe, that England was bent upon prosecuting the war at all hazards for her own selfish interests, and that her Ministry were not sincere in the assent they had given to the Austrian propositions. This report, the inventors of which were well known to be acting in Russian interests, was creating a sore feeling in France, where peace on any terms was the doctrine advocated by all the opponents to the Anglo-French alliance. It was necessary to give it an authoritative denial, and Lord Clarendon, conscious how fatal its existence might be to his usefulness in the approaching Conferences, seized this opportunity for doing so:—

'My lords,' he said, 'our sincerity in these negotiations is also called in question. Throughout the Continent of Europe we are accused of insincerity in accepting these conditions. It has been said that, though we have accepted them, we mean to continue the war, simply because we want more war, not for any definite end, but in the expectation that another campaign would be productive of more military glory, which would serve to compensate us for the sacrifices we have made. I mention these reports, because they have been widely circulated, and pretty generally believed, and also because I desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to give to them the most unqualified denial. However much we may be aware of the spirit which animates the country, however much it may be regretted that the vast preparations which we have made—preparations, such as there has been no instance of before in the history of this country—should not be turned to account, and should not be made to redound to the military and naval fame of England, yet I am convinced, that the number of persons who put faith in these reports will be very rapidly diminished, when it is seen that, notwithstanding all the efforts we have made, and all the sacrifices we have undergone, we hold faithfully to the conditions which we have once accepted. But should any attempt be made to deprive us of the conditions which we have a right to demand, and to which we have already agreed, then I believe the people of the country would be as one man. They would not consider any sacrifices too great to carry on the war, and we might then expect conditions of a very different nature from those which Her Majesty's Government have now accepted, and to which they will frankly and honourably adhere.'

The Address in answer to the Queen's Speech was carried in both Houses without a division. But in the course of his speech on the first night of the Session Lord Derby gave notice of his intention to raise a question on which the Ministry a few nights afterwards sustained a marked defeat in the House of Lords.

This was the question of the validity of the creation of a life-peerage in the person of Sir James Parke, under the title of Lord Wensleydale—a measure resorted to by the Government for the purpose of strengthening the House of Lords as the court of ultimate appeal. The right of the Crown to create a life-peerage with a right to sit in Parliament, while scarcely disputed in the discussions which arose, could not be shown to have been exercised since the reign of Richard II. To Sir James Parke personally it was impossible that exception should be taken; and the question of prerogative could not, therefore, have been raised under more favourable circumstances. But the measure was viewed with extreme jealousy and distrust, as the right to create life-peerages, with a seat in the House of Lords, if once admitted, might at any time be used by a Government for the purpose of strengthening their party in that House. Lord Lyndhurst brought the matter to issue on the 7th of February by a 'motion to refer the Letters Patent which had been granted in this case to the Committee for Privileges, with directions to examine and consider the same, and report thereon to the House.' After an animated debate, in which the motion was supported with much learning and eloquence on both sides of the House, it was carried by a majority of thirty-three. The report of the Committee of Privileges was adverse to the right of the Crown to create life-peerages; and in deference to this decision, and the strongly-expressed opinion of the House generally, the Patent was cancelled, and Sir James Parke was called to the Peerage by a Patent of Peerage in the usual form.[1]

The defeat on this question caused considerable embarrassment to the Government; and attempts were made to stimulate the popular jealousy of Royal Prerogative, and of foreign interference, by representing the Prince Consort as the chief instigator of the measure, which he was assumed to have devised with the ulterior object of introducing men of eminence in science, literature, and the arts, into the House of Lords. But in the excitement which prevailed in regard to the war, little attention had been paid by the public to what was undoubtedly a constitutional question of the highest importance, and as it was in no sense one of party, the incident could not be said to have weakened the position of the Ministry. Besides, at this moment, all parties were desirous to strengthen their hands, and to enable the representatives of England at the Paris Conferences to speak the voice of an united nation.

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[1] The necessity for doing something to give strength to the court of ultimate appeal was so strongly felt, that a Committee of the House of Lords was appointed, on the motion of Lord Derby (28th February), to consider the question. Following the recommendation of this Committee's Report, the Appellate Jurisdiction Bill was introduced by the Lord Chancellor in the following May, and passed through the House of Lords. It provided for the appointment of two Judges of five years' standing as Deputy Speakers of the House of Lords, and enabled the Crown, if it saw fit, to grant life-peerages, with all the rights and privileges of Peers of Parliament, to not more than four persons, including the two Deputy Speakers. In the House of Commons the Bill, which was considered to deal very inadequately with the question of the Court of Appeal, found little favour. The limitation of the Royal Prerogative, which it implied, was also strongly objected to, and the Government had to withdraw the Bill, even after it passed the second reading.

Happily, if the negotiations there should fail, and the war should have to be renewed, England was in the best position financially to carry it on. The deficit for the quarter ending 5th of April, 1856, was computed by the Chancellor at only about four millions. This the Rothschilds were prepared to contract for in 3 per cents. at *90l.*, agreeing at the same time to fund three millions of Exchequer bills on the same terms. These terms spoke volumes for the country's credit, but even more remarkable was the fact reported by Lord Palmerston in a letter to the Queen (22nd February), that on its becoming known that the Rothschilds were about to tender for this loan, a sum of no less than twenty-eight millions was offered to them by parties anxious to have a share in it, while three millions of deposits by these applicants were actually paid into their hands. With the credit of England standing so high, and the spirit of the nation such as it had been proclaimed to be by Mr. Disraeli and others in Parliament, Lord Clarendon could take his place at the coming Conferences, without serious apprehension that either the intrigues of adversaries, or the weakness of half-hearted friends, would prevail against his legitimate demands.

He was aware, as we have seen, that it was to the Emperor of the French himself, and not to his Ministers, that he must look for support. 'Unity of action was as essential at the Council table as in the field,' were, however, the Emperor's own words, in writing to the Queen (21st January). Acting upon the opening thus afforded, Lord Clarendon suggested that a letter to the Emperor, of which he should be the bearer, enforcing the same idea, would have an excellent effect. Accordingly Her Majesty wrote the following letter, in which the Emperor's expressed desire, that any divergencies of opinion which still existed between the two Governments might be removed before the Conferences were opened, finds the strongest echo:—

'Buckingham Palace, 15th February, 1856.

'Sire and dear Brother,—My Commissioners for the Council of War have scarcely returned from Paris, and our plan for the campaign has scarcely been settled, when my Plenipotentiaries for the Peace Conference start to assist, under Your Majesty's eyes, in the work of pacification. It is not necessary that I should commend Lord Clarendon to Your Majesty, but I am unwilling to let him go without making him the bearer of a few words from myself.

'Although quite convinced, that in the approaching discussions no questions can arise upon which there will be a divergence of opinion between our two Governments, still I consider it of the highest importance that the most perfect accord should be established before the Conferences are opened; and it is with this view that I have instructed Lord Clarendon to proceed to Paris some days beforehand, in order that he may be able to give an exact account of the opinions of my Government, and enjoy the advantage of becoming thoroughly acquainted with those of Your Majesty.

'It will afford me deep satisfaction at this critical moment, and I shall esteem it as a special proof of your friendship, if you will allow Lord Clarendon to explain my views to you in person, and to learn yours from your own mouth.

'The operations of our combined armies and fleets under a divided command have been subjected to enormous difficulties, but these difficulties have happily been overcome. In diplomacy, as in war, the Russians will have a great advantage over us in their unity of plan and action, and I believe they are stronger here than in the field of battle; but, beyond all doubt, we shall continue to be as victorious here as elsewhere, if we can prevent the enemy from dividing our forces, and fighting us in detail.

'Without wishing to cast a doubt upon the sincerity of Russia in accepting our propositions, it is impossible to have a full and entire conviction on this subject. I have every reason, however, to believe, that no effort and no stratagem will be neglected to break up, if possible, or at least to weaken our alliance. But in this respect I repose the same confidence in Your Majesty's firmness for destroying all these hopes, as I feel in my own and in that of my Ministers. Yet it is impossible to attach too much importance to the fact, that this common firmness shall be recognised and appreciated from the very outset of the negotiations, for on this, I am satisfied, will depend whether we shall or shall not obtain a peace, the terms of which can be considered satisfactory for the honour of France and England, and as affording adequate compensation for the gigantic sacrifices which both countries have made. There is yet another consideration which leads me to attach the greatest value to this complete accord, and it is this; that if, for want of it, we were drawn into a peace that did not satisfy the just expectations of our peoples, complaints and recriminations would spring up, which could scarcely fail to disturb the friendly relations of the two countries, in place of cementing them more closely, as it is my ardent desire they should be cemented. Besides, I do not for a moment doubt that a peace such as France and England are entitled to demand, will to a certainty be obtained by an inflexible determination not to abate the moderate demands which we have made.

'You will excuse, Sire, the length of this letter, but it is very pleasant to me to be able to give free utterance to my sentiments on all these important and difficult questions, to one whom I regard, not merely as a faithful Ally, but as a friend on whom I can under all circumstances rely, and who, I am sure, is animated by the same sentiments towards us.

'The Prince begs me to offer you his kindest regards, and I am always, Sire and dear Brother, your Imperial Majesty's very affectionate sister and friend,

'VICTORIA R.'

Lord Clarendon reached Paris on the morning of the 17th of February, and dined with the Emperor at the Tuileries the same evening. After dinner, a confidential conversation left the impression upon Lord Clarendon's mind, that he might rely upon the Emperor to stand by him throughout the negotiations:—

'On no occasion,' he wrote next morning to the Queen, had he 'heard the Emperor express himself more warmly or with greater determination in favour of the Alliance, and His Majesty entirely concurred with Lord Clarendon, that upon the perfect understanding between the two Governments, and the conviction on the part of others, that the Alliance was not to be shaken, depended the facility with which negotiations might be conducted and the terms on which peace would be made. Lord Clarendon spoke with the utmost frankness about the flattery which had been, and would continue to be addressed to His Majesty, and the contrast perpetually drawn between England and France to the disparagement of the former for the purpose of disturbing the relations between them, but that Your Majesty and Your Majesty's Government had always treated these tricks with contempt, because the confidence in the Emperor's honour and loyalty was complete. Lord Clarendon dwelt particularly upon the feelings of Your Majesty and of the Prince on this subject, and the pleasure it gave the Emperor was evident, and he desired Lord Clarendon to say that Your Majesty should never find such confidence misplaced. He promised Lord Clarendon that he would give Baron Brunnow and Count Buol to understand that, if they thought the Alliance could be disturbed by them, they would find themselves grievously mistaken, and that it would be waste of time to try to alter any conditions upon which he had agreed with the English Government.

'The Emperor appeared to be much gratified by Your Majesty's letter, for the first thing he said to Lord Clarendon on coming into the room before dinner was, "*quelle charmante lettre vous m'avez apportée de la Reine!*" and then began upon the extraordinary clearness with which Your Majesty treated all matters of business, and the pleasure he derived from every discussion of them with Your Majesty.'

Early as Lord Clarendon appeared upon the scene, he found he had been forestalled by Baron Brunnow, one of the Russian Plenipotentiaries, who had arrived in Paris on the 13th, not without hopes, it might be presumed, of fomenting the Russian and anti-English sentiment which had for some time been artificially stimulated in Paris. There could be no doubt that the feeling there was strong for bringing the war to a close upon any terms. The novelty and excitement of it had been worn out, and a war nearer home, and with more immediate prospects of direct material gain, would have made its burdens more palatable in many quarters. These views the Emperor did not share. He believed them, moreover, to be confined to the salons, and not to be shared by the nation. In any case he assured Lord Clarendon that, if the peace negotiations broke down through any attempt of Russia to fritter away the conditions of the Austrian Ultimatum, he 'should have no more hesitation, and no more difficulty with France, about renewing the war, than he had about declaring it two years ago.'[2]

While the feeling in Paris in favour of peace was what we have described, how was the question viewed by the leading French officers at the seat of war? The accounts which reached the English Government, from a source on which it could place absolute reliance, showed, that while the terms of the Ultimatum were regarded as honourable to the armies, to whose valour they were due, and advantageous to Europe, they could not be taken to indicate any repentance on the part of Russia for the conduct which had provoked the war. French officers, of the highest rank, openly stated their belief, that Russia would never abandon her policy with respect to Turkey; she would use the peace to develop all her own resources by land and sea, with a view to effecting her designs at the first favourable moment, while all her arts of diplomacy would in the meantime be used to sap the union between England and France, and to prevent any reform of the corrupt and vicious administration of the Porte. The men who so spoke declared that what they had seen of the countries under Turkish rule since the war commenced had convinced them of the necessity for the war. We had seen, they said, what Turkey had done with resources which have no equal, and we know what Russia would do with them were they at her disposal. We have learned also with what skill Russia can turn the fanaticism of the various peoples who inhabit these regions to account in furtherance of her designs, and, while doing full justice to the moderation and estimable personal qualities of the Emperor Alexander, we are satisfied that the only true barrier to the encroachments of the policy of his Empire towards Turkey will be found in a lasting alliance between England and France. It was only because the Eastern Question was not understood in France, that these opinions were not general there.

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[2] Lord Clarendon in private Despatch to Lord Palmerston, 18th February, 1856.

Meanwhile the friends of Russia were profuse in their assurances, that the old policy of Russia was changed, and that no war need ever have arisen, had the Western Powers not shown an undue suspicion of the intentions of the late Emperor. When, however, Baron Brunnow, in an interview with Lord Clarendon, the day after his arrival in Paris, adopted this line of argument, urging that the main cause of the war had been mistrust of the Emperor Nicholas, and that until confidence was established he could hope for no solid peace, he was given very clearly to understand that the English were not to be told they had been fighting under a delusion. Lord Clarendon replied, that he could not allow such an observation to pass unnoticed, as Baron Brunnow well knew that our confidence in the late Emperor had lasted much too long, that it had been destroyed by his own acts, and that it would not be restored until the acts of the present Emperor should justify confidence in his policy and intentions. To this Baron Brunnow replied, that the English Government would have every reason to be satisfied with the Emperor, who intended to change altogether the political system hitherto adopted by Russia. But he could obtain no further concession from Lord Clarendon than that he was well inclined to believe this, as the Emperor must know that Europe would no longer endure the aggressive policy on which Russia had hitherto acted.

It is curious to contrast the tone of Baron Brunnow with that of Count Orloff, his colleague as Plenipotentiary, in a conversation with Lord Clarendon a few days later. Count Orloff made no attempt to throw the blame of the war on our distrust of harmless intentions on the part of the Emperor of Russia, but ascribed it solely to his rashness and to a blundering diplomacy. The Emperor, he said, had never intended to go to war, and did not, in fact, want to quarrel with Turkey. But a quarrel had been drawn on by the high-handed action of Prince Menschikoff, who, on account of his irritable character, ought never to have been sent to Constantinople. This was the first mistake. The next was the occupation of the Principalities by Russia ; the consequences of which Count Orloff said he had pointed out to the Emperor at the time. Then came the affair of Sinope, which was received with rejoicings at St. Petersburg, but which he had at once told the Emperor must lead to war with England. The refusal of the Turkish amendments to the Vienna Note, the whole diplomacy of Russia, in short, he described as a series of blunders, which lost to Russia good opportunities of retiring from a contest which should never have been undertaken. Upon this view Russia, and not England, was the Power which had in truth drifted into the war, borne along upon the current of her own dictatorial passion, and blinded by her contempt for the fancied weakness of the Turkish nation.

When Prussia saw that negotiations for peace were to be entered upon, the ignoble side of the position in which her vaunted neutrality had placed her seems to have become for the first time palpable to the King, and he became most anxious that his kingdom should be represented at the Conferences. Austria, alleging gratitude for his good offices in support of her Ultimatum at St. Petersburg, was ready to concede the claim. It was, however, met by a decided refusal both in Paris and London, and in this strait the King invoked the assistance of the King of the Belgians. But if King Leopold ever entertained the idea of using his influence on the King of Prussia's behalf, either at the Court of St. James's or of the Tuileries, he was not likely to act upon it,—even although his opinion went, as it seems to have done, in the King's favour,—after learning from Prince Albert, as he did in the following letter, how firmly the English Cabinet was resolved to turn a deaf ear to any such application. On the 16th of February, the day Lord Clarendon started for Paris, the Prince wrote:—

'My dear Uncle,—Accept my best thanks for your kind letter. . . . It seems to me to have been prompted by two feelings: one, the apprehension that we might be inclined to do something with a view to making peace impossible; and the other, the wish to see Prussia admitted into the Conferences at Paris.

'I am able to share neither this wish nor that apprehension, and, to explain why, I must call your attention to our position in regard to the Eastern Question.

'All sorts of charges are brought against us,—that we are actuated by excessive hatred towards the Russians, that peace in Europe does not suit our views, that our object has been to use and make a tool of France for our own objects in the East (because of India, &c.) The truth of the matter, on the contrary, is, that a great European question was at issue, and France and ourselves were, and still are, the only Powers possessed of the firmness, the courage, and the disinterestedness, to grapple with it. We know very well that England is hated all over the Continent, that even in France it is the Emperor, and the Emperor alone, who is with us body and soul; we have encountered endless dangers, suffered great losses, made gigantic sacrifices, still we have gone calmly forward towards the object we had set before ourselves. We are ready to make more extensive and greater sacrifices, if need be, to *enforce* the true solution of the question, but we hope the point has been reached at which it may be effected by a few strokes of the pen.

'We should, therefore, be acting like suicides, were we to entertain any intention of throwing obstacles in the way of peace, but it would be no less suicidal, were we to let ourselves now at the eleventh hour be juggled (*herausschwindeln lassen*) out of the object of the war (the solution of the Eastern Question), or were we even to help to augment our difficulties by increasing the number of elements at the Conferences friendly to the Russians and hostile to ourselves. Our position in the Conferences, as I have said, will be one of extreme difficulty, for except the Emperor Napoleon, we have no one on our side. All his Ministers are susceptible to indirect influences, his army is more intent on war against Germany than against Russia, the people about him are imprudent, Austria is as selfish and as little to be relied on as ever, she will care only about the Principalities and Bessarabia as Austrian interests, and on all other questions will leave us in the lurch. Russia will not yield one hair's breadth more than she is *forced* to yield.

'It is all very well to say, that your arguments were listened to by the Emperor Alexander,—exactly the same story is told to the King of Prussia by the people about him. It is all very well that Herr von Beust should claim for himself the whole merit of the recent peaceful disposition, and should even be out-bidden on that point by Herr von Seebach, &c. &c. All this is very good to hear, and useful for the Russians to say, because by doing so they impose upon all their counsellors the obligation to place themselves now upon their side in return. But for all that the truth remains, that Russia is doing what she cannot help doing; and if she can shake off the compulsion, which consists in the English and French Alliance, and in the readiness of that Alliance to continue the war, and also of late, in the accession of Austria to that alliance, with the (at least possible) prospect of ultimately taking part in the war,—she will be ready and disposed to shake it off; and the danger will lie in this, that in the hope of being able to shake it off, she may suffer herself to be misled again into rejecting the conditions which we look upon as necessary and indispensable.

'As for the special claims of Prussia or even of Germany (which Herr von Beust wishes to represent at the Conferences) to take part in the negotiations, these have no sort of foundation. It is not revenge nor the wish to punish her, which prevents us from admitting them, for this would be childish; but, over and above the justifiable fear of increasing the number of our opponents in the approaching discussions, we are actuated by the conviction, that it would be a most perilous precedent for the future to admit the principle, that Powers may take a part in the great game of politics, without having laid down their stake. In this way *they* can only be gainers, while they leave the losses to others. Besides, the question here is between Powers who have waged war against each other and wish to conclude a peace. What right, then, have others to interfere, who have taken no part in the conflict, and have constantly maintained that their interests are not touched by the matter in dispute, and that therefore they would not take any part in the business?

'. . . . Lord Clarendon starts to-day for Paris. That Baron Brunnow has received permission to ensconce himself (*sich einzunisten*) there, even before the representatives of the Allies were upon the ground, shows with what difficulties we shall have to contend, for the Emperor [of the French] had expressly forbidden it.'

The arguments against the admission of Prussia to the negotiations for peace were manifestly unanswerable. When, however, the immediate dispute between the belligerents was adjusted, if any general treaty in the interests of Europe came, as it probably would, to be discussed, then would be the time to admit Prussia into council. It was natural, however, that exclusion of Prussia at the earlier deliberations should create a feeling of regret in those who had the dignity of the kingdom at heart. This feeling seems to have been expressed by the Prince of Prussia in writing to the Prince, who met his representations with his accustomed frankness in a letter, on the 11th of March, from which we translate the following passage:—

'In the present case the difference between your views and mine is in appearance only, for I must wish as heartily as yourself that Prussia should maintain her position as one of the Great Powers, and as such should be a party to a general European treaty; but, while so wishing, precedence must be given to the necessity that an honourable and secure peace with Russia shall first have been secured, *in* obtaining which the whole labour falls upon England, and *to* the obtaining of which long and alas! often renewed experience has shown us, that nothing would create such serious obstacles as the infusion of the Berlin element (if I may so call it) into the transactions of the Conference. Firmness and perseverance on our part have so far prevailed hitherto, despite the most decided disinclination on the part of Russia even to carry out the points of the Austrian Ultimatum, which she had accepted, that I begin to believe in peace; and so soon as that is *assured*, I have no doubt it will be followed by an invitation to Prussia to take part in the general treaty. Should this prove to be the case, you will admit that the Western Powers could not possibly have behaved more justly or dispassionately.'

What the Prince here shadowed out in fact took place; and on the 18th of March the Prussian Plenipotentiaries were admitted to the Conference, and took part in the discussions which resulted in the General Treaty of Peace.

Highly as the Emperor of the French appreciated the principles which guided the British Sovereign and her Consort in all public affairs, even he would have been surprised, could he have known how firm was the attitude which had been maintained by the Prince in regard to Prussia. That this is so, is very obvious from the following account of a conversation with him which occurs in a letter from Lord Clarendon to the Queen, on the 25th of March:—

'On Sunday when talking of the difficulties raised by the Prussian Plenipotentiaries, the Emperor said he cared nothing about Prussia, and that England had much more interest in pleasing the King of Prussia than France. Lord Clarendon asked what that interest was. The Emperor answered, the marriage of the Princess Royal, which must make the Queen anxious to be on good terms with Prussia. Lord Clarendon said, that the Emperor was greatly mistaken, if he thought that the private feelings of Your Majesty ever interfered with what Your Majesty might think right for the honour or the interests of England, and that long before the Emperor had made up his mind on the subject, Lord Clarendon knew that Your Majesty had determined, and had made no secret of the opinion, that to admit Prussia to take part in the negotiations for peace, after her conduct throughout the war had been condemned by Your Majesty's Government, would be degrading to England, and a proof that she viewed political immorality with indifference. The Emperor answered: "*Savez-vous, que c'est bien beau? cela fait plaisir d'entendre. Je suis bien aise que vous me l'ayez dit.*"'

CHAPTER LXXI.

At the very moment when the country was looking forward to a speedy end to the war, military reformers had a fresh impetus given to their agitation by the publication of the Report of Sir John MacNeill and Colonel Tulloch, who had been sent out by the Government to the Crimea in February 1855 as Commissioners to inquire into the causes of the break-down in the Commissariat and other departments. They had issued a first Report from Constantinople, in June of that year, which had led to the recall by the Government of the Commissary-General. A second and final Report, which reached the Government on the 20th of January, had been presented to Parliament soon after its meeting, and in this great blame was thrown upon Lords Lucan and Cardigan, Sir Richard Airey, and the Hon. Colonel Gordon. Lord Lucan had since his return from the Crimea been appointed Colonel of a regiment, and Lord Cardigan Inspector of Cavalry, while Sir Richard Airey and Colonel Gordon were respectively Quartermaster, and Deputy-Quartermaster General, the latter having received his appointment in October, and the former in December 1855.

While these officers, on the one hand, complained, not without reason, that the Report of the Commissioners should have been made public without their having an opportunity of being heard in their own defence, the army reformers in Parliament were eager, on the other hand, to base upon the Report a public censure of the officers incriminated by it. On the 15th of February Mr. Layard gave notice that on that day fortnight he would move a resolution expressive of the regret of the House of Commons at observing 'that those persons, whose conduct in respect of certain departments, as shown in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the supplies of the British army in the Crimea, had caused great and unnecessary suffering and loss in that army, had received honours and rewards, and had been appointed to, and still held, responsible offices in the public service.' The statements in the Report, unqualified as they were by any explanations on the other side, or by any indication that they did not carry with them the full assent of the Government, produced very naturally a deep and general impression on the public mind. The Ministry, finding that this would probably lead to Mr. Layard's motion being carried, had to consider how the public feeling would be satisfied, and a fair opportunity be at the same time afforded to the officers in question to vindicate themselves. They therefore resolved to appoint a Royal Commission, composed of officers of high standing, to investigate the charges raised on the Commissioners' Report, a course, for which a precedent was found in the Military Commission appointed in 1805 to inquire in regard to the Convention of Cintra. On the 21st of February Lord Panmure announced this intention in the House of Lords. The plan was generally approved, but in what was said by more than one speaker, the Government did not escape animadversion for having laid the Report before Parliament without first giving the officers inculpated an opportunity of explanation, or accompanying its production with a statement of the conclusions which they had themselves formed upon it.

The same evening Lord Derby raised a discussion as to the relative duties of the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War, and especially as to their responsibility for the higher appointments in the army. In reply, Lord Panmure gave a clear statement of the separate functions of the two departments, and of the measures for which both shared the responsibility, and concluded with an appeal to the House to think well before it consented to increase the authority of the Minister and diminish that of the Commander-in-Chief, by committing to the former, as some military reformers wished, the administration of the patronage of the army. In closing the discussion Lord Derby approved strongly of the proposed Military Commission as the right means of redressing whatever injustice had been done by the premature publication of Sir John MacNeill's Report. He at the same time expressed warm satisfaction at having obtained the assurance, that the Government intended 'to maintain inviolate in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief the control of the discipline, the organisation, and the patronage of Her Majesty's army.'

The Government proposal did not, however, pass unchallenged. In the House of Commons Mr. Roebuck, on the 29th of January, moved that the appointment of the proposed Military Commission would 'substitute an inefficient for a very efficient mode of inquiry, and that its effect would be to hide the misconduct of those, by whom various departments of our army had been subjected to the command of officers who had been inculpated by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into their conduct.' The debate which ensued was enlivened by not a few personalities, the chief offender being General Sir De Lacy Evans, who made vehement attacks upon General Simpson, among others, but more especially upon Colonel Gordon, whom he sneered at as 'the Palace favourite,' probably because he had been, before the war, one of the Prince's equerries. The introduction of General Simpson's name provoked a severe rebuke from Mr. Gladstone. The defence of Colonel Gordon was urged with admirable temper and good taste by his brother. But his vindication from the special charge brought against him was completed at a later stage of the debate by his relative Lord Claud Hamilton, who had apparently been furnished in the meantime with the materials for disproving an attack, of which no previous intimation had been given.

The vindication was unanswerable, but the speaker, not content with this, seized the opportunity to complete the discomfiture of General De Lacy Evans, by charging him with having advised Lord Raglan, after the battle of Inkermann, to embark his troops with all speed, and to leave his siege material behind him. The statement produced a profound sensation, especially as General Evans, in a feeble reply, all but admitted the charge. He was not much more successful in a further attempt, a few nights afterwards, to explain it away, after having, upon the same occasion, expressed strong regret for the terms in which he had spoken of both General Simpson and Colonel Gordon. A general desire was, however, shown not to press the matter further, and Mr. Disraeli, while maintaining that Lord Claud Hamilton had been justified by the information in his possession in saying what he had said as to the extraordinary advice alleged to have been given to Lord Raglan, stopped further discussion by referring to the well-understood rules of the House, according to which statements of this kind could not be satisfactorily met.[1] The

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[1] It was understood at the time that Lord Claud Hamilton did not make his statement without authority. It is certainly corroborated by the following Memorandum by Sir Edmund Lyons, which he sent to Sir Charles Wood on the 7th of March, 1856, after having first had it confirmed by Captain Drummond. We print it from a copy among the Prince's papers:—'On the way back to Balaclava from the field of Inkermann, Sir De Lacy Evans rode up to me whilst I was riding with Captain Drummond of the *Retribution*, and told me that he had just urged Lord Raglan to embark the army immediately. "What," I said, "leave the guns, the sick and wounded here?" He replied, "The guns, certainly," and he added, that Lord Raglan would not be the first great General who had done so: that it would certainly require a great mind

House, who had voted the thanks of the nation to Sir De Lacy Evans some months before for his gallant conduct at Inkermann, gladly adopted this view. On the main question it had shown clearly, during the progress of the debate, that it looked with no favour upon Mr. Roebuck's motion, whereupon that gentleman, finding himself, in his own words, 'as he usually was, happily in a minority,' declared that he would not put the House to the trouble of dividing. On this the House went into committee on the more material question of the Army Estimates, and with more than usual alacrity, voted six millions and a half on account.

The Prince had, as we have seen, been looking eagerly for the return of Baron Stockmar to England. He was most anxious that the Baron should be present at the Confirmation of the Princess Royal, which was soon to take place. Not less so was the Baron, to whom the Princess was especially dear, but one thing after another had prevented him from carrying out his intention. On the 25th of February the Prince wrote to him:—

'That you should put off your coming in this way is really too bad! You should in any case be present at the Confirmation. . . . We are tolerably well in this world of troubles.

'The Peers have carried their motion against the Prerogative of the Crown, and the idea that *I* intended to bring Lords Playfair, Babbage, and Murchison into the Upper House has served as one of the principal inducements to that result!

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to come to such a resolution, but he hoped Lord Raglan was the man to do it. I answered, that I thought I knew Lord Raglan well enough to be sure that he would do no such thing. Sir De Lacy Evans still urged his view of the case, and when I found all other arguments fail, I observed that we ought to consider what the French would do under the circumstances; and I added, that they would either be forced to accompany us, and in that case would justly accuse us of having betrayed them,—or that they would remain, and take the place without us,—or that they would be destroyed for want of our support, and that thenceforth "perfide Albion" would be household words in France.'

'The Army debate in the Upper House has, on the other hand, done a very great deal of good, and strengthened and placed on a distinct footing the position of the Commander-in-Chief and of the Crown towards the Army and Parliament.

'Lords Lucan and Cardigan, Sir Richard Airey and Colonel Gordon, are now to be brought before a Military Commission, where they hope to justify themselves triumphantly, while *The Times* is furious that its victims are rescued from its clutches.

'The Conferences in Paris began yesterday. Bessarabia appears to be the point which the Russians are most reluctant to swallow, but this is the one which of all others has been expressly recognised in the Ultimatum. Lord Clarendon seems to have *bien pris sa position*, and to inspire general confidence; still, the outcry of the Paris *salons*, that it is only England that does not wish for peace, is doing us serious harm.

'Phipps has had his daughter, who was just married, at death's door in Paris, and was summoned thither a week ago. She is now better, and I have recalled him, so as to give the malicious world no warrant for the gossiping rumour, which is already current, that the Court is more pacific than Palmerston, and would be well pleased that the Russians should keep themselves *en rapport* with it.

'The things of all sorts that are laid on our shoulders, i.e. on *mine*, are not to be told. People feel that a certain power exists which has not thrust itself ostentatiously forward, and therefore they fancy it must be doing harm, even although the results of what it does must all be admitted to be good. The logic of their inference is not very sound.

'Still our exhortation to you is, "Come! Come!"'

In his retreat at Coburg the Baron appears to have kept up an active correspondence with some of the ablest and best informed politicians in Europe. The striking phenomenon of Russia accepting conditions of peace which up to the last hour she had rejected as inadmissible, no doubt led to every kind of conjecture as to its cause among the diviners of the secret motives by which the actions of States are governed. The simple solution, that Russia was unable to prolong the conflict,—that in fact she yielded, as the Prince had written to King Leopold, that she alone would yield—because she could not help doing so, and knew that she would only make matters worse for herself by resisting,[2] was too simple for minds sharpened by that habitual distrust of ostensible reasons, which is generated by diplomatic experience. But except in the statement that Russia was now disposed to conclude a peace from prudence, and not from necessity, the views expressed by the correspondent quoted in the following letter from Baron Stockmar, which the Prince received at this time, are those of a man who must have been very much behind the scenes at more Courts than one. They tallied closely with those at which the Queen and Prince had arrived from the information which reached them through other channels :—

'A well-informed correspondent writes to me within the last few days as follows :

'"Russia does not conclude the peace from necessity, but from prudence. She has not suffered so much as her adversaries imagine; on this point do not be deceived. Her aim is rather to profit by the peaceful disposition of Europe, and by the assumption of a peaceful attitude; and this at the expense of England, which alone would be made the scapegoat if the Conferences should break down. Russia will gain over France, and spare Austria, until a good opportunity occurs to read her a sharp lecture, but no longer. On the other hand, Austria seems for the moment to think of nothing but of doing a good stroke of business for herself, with the *arrière pensée*, if things come to a rupture, of attaching herself again to Russia, and renewing in such an event the former Northern Alliance, rather than adhering to the December treaty with the Western Powers. And at this moment this renewal is also the sole object of the Prussian policy, if there be anything there that deserves the name.

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[2] The language of the abler of the Russian plenipotentiaries at Paris to Lord Clarendon was : 'We have been beaten. Russia is humiliated, and she is about to sign a Treaty such as never was signed by Russia before.' Read this by the light of what is now known as to the fearful losses in men sustained by Russia, as well as to her exhaustion in the material and sinews of war, and there can be but one conclusion. General Della Marmora, after his return to Turin, told our Ambassador there, 'The Russians had no cavalry left, guns unhorsed, regiments unofficered, the men armed with flint and steel muskets—in short, they were dead beat.'

'"On the other hand, the personal relations of Napoleon with England appear to be sincere and unwavering, but it is a wholly different question whether as much can be said of the French Government and people. This much I know for certain, that the dabblers in stocks in Paris are extremely sensitive to Russian intrigues, and the country itself very tired of the war! How if, in order to conclude a peace *à tout prix* within the sphere of diplomatic negotiation, a * revision of the Treaty of 1815 should be manœuvred? Out of that strange results might ensue.*

'"Russia is most anxious that Prussia * should remain outside the sphere of the peace negotiations, because Prussia will be thereby still further alienated from England."*

'Those two last passages, which I have marked with a star, gave me cause for reflection; all the more that what they contain had, before the receipt of the letter, already struck my own mind as probable. And I have felt the more bound to attach weight to these conjectures, from having a short time before heard from a French source in these terms:—

'"Is it then so probable that the *idées Napoléoniennes* have been abandoned? I do not believe it. Could not some of them be realised through a Congress, now that experience has shown that it is not easy to bring them to pass by prolongation of the war?[3] Is not the Emperor in a position, out of the peace negotiations, to bring about a Congress, which, *eo ipso*, shall effectuate, as upon a stage, a complete change of scene, and so pave the way for new phases, new relations and dependencies, new and hostile alliances? Why should not a Tilsit scene be performed before long as it was in 1807? How would England stand then?"

'I sit here in the dusk, and cannot in the least decide whether the people who are on the spot and in the daylight are right. But amid the darkness I can still descry one great difficulty. Such an interest as must of necessity be created by an alliance between France and Russia, and the establishment of which can alone give fitness, stability, and purpose to the Alliance, is in direct opposition to all the present interests of Austria, Prussia, and Germany. A Russo-French alliance will, therefore, hardly venture in 1856 upon what it was able to do in 1802 and 1808 with success. It will have no feasible object.

'21st February, 1856.'

The difficulties, which Lord Clarendon encountered in Paris between his arrival there and the meeting of the Conference, put the firmness and sagacity of himself and his coadjutor Lord Cowley to a severe trial. The attempts to shake the attachment of the Emperor of the French to the English alliance proved utterly ineffectual; but, feeling less strongly than we did the importance of the guarantees which we considered essential to the peace of Europe, he was not indisposed to turn a favourable ear to some of the Russian proposals, which would have greatly qualified the concessions they had made in their acceptance, pure and simple, of the Austrian Ultimatum. Since that acceptance had been given, Kars had fallen, and the Russian Plenipotentiaries now wished to stipulate that the Allies should abandon the condition as to surrender of Russian territory in Bessarabia, in return for the restoration by Russia of the Turkish territory, including Kars, in Asia Minor, of which the Czar was in military possession. This would have been effectually to defeat the object of the Ultimatum in one of its most vital points, viz., the 'efficacious assurance of the freedom of the Danube and its mouths,' besides implying a surrender of the fundamental principle for which the Allies had gone to war, namely, the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire. England had also insisted from the first upon the condition that Russia should come under engagement not again to fortify the Aland Islands in the Baltic. Our Government had wished this to be made known to Russia by Austria at the time her Ultimatum was forwarded to St. Petersburg as one of the 'special conditions' which we should require under the fifth article of the Ultimatum. Austria had not complied with this wish, and her failure to be as explicit as England thought she ought to have been, in fairness to Russia, led to serious difficulty.

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[3] A few weeks later (13th April) Lord Clarendon writing to Lord Palmerston expressed the same opinion. 'I see,' he wrote, 'that the idea of a European Congress is germinating in the Emperor's mind, and with it the arrondissement of the French frontier, the abolition of obsolete Treaties, and such other *remaniements* as may be *necessary*. I *improvised* a longish catalogue of dangers and difficulties that such a Congress would entail, unless its decisions were unanimous, which was not probable, or one or two of the strongest Powers were prepared to go to war for what they wanted. He does not wish for such a Congress immediately, but he is looking ahead, and foresees that in a year or two, when the French people get tired of the arts of peace, he shall want something new and striking for their amusement.'

Lord Clarendon was determined to negotiate no Treaty in which these terms were not secured. The Emperor of the French, however, less able to appreciate their importance, and having in the wretched state of his army in the Crimea a stronger motive than England for peace, would not have been indisposed to make some concessions, on the ground, that as the main objects of the war had been gained, it was only becoming, in two great nations, like France and England, '*de faire le généreux et le gentleman.*' This, Lord Clarendon had to tell him, might be a pleasant pastime for His Majesty, who was irresponsible, but the English Government had some masters to consult called Parliament and Public Opinion, to say nothing of Party Spirit, and, if we made a Treaty, which we could not defend, we might be sure that the attacks upon it would soon find an echo in Paris, and be quite as damaging to His Majesty as to Lord Palmerston's Ministry.

The Emperor felt the force of these representations, and they determined him in supporting the English views. But he found some difficulty in counteracting the mischief which had been already done by his representatives as well as by himself, in having let the Russian Plenipotentiaries see that they were inclined to entertain easier terms than those on which England considered that by the express language of the Ultimatum she was entitled to insist.

It was still uncertain, whether Russia would give way upon the points we have indicated, and some others of minor moment, when the Prince wrote the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'Buckingham Palace, 10th March, 1856.

'In Paris we have no peace as yet. Russia shows no inclination to carry out honourably even one of the conditions which she had already accepted, unless under compulsion, and we are the only constraining force. In France they are anxious for peace, and the Russians hear nothing else from morning till night; in Austria they do not want war, and the Russians know this also. We are ready to continue fighting, *and we might even carry the others along with us*; but would this be prudent? Yet it may come to this, and the Russians run the risk, to which they have been liable since 1853, of misunderstanding the real state of affairs, and of once more forfeiting peace, through unbelief in the possibility of Europe continuing the war! It would be a strange spectacle, however, were Orloff and Brunnow to withdraw, and peace not to be arranged, because they declined to concede what they accepted on the Austrian Ultimatum, and again in the Vienna Protocol, and for the third time at the opening of the Conferences, as the Preliminaries of Peace.

'Here the House of Commons and the Press vie with each other in follies (*Unarten*) of every description, and all real power of resistance seems for the moment to have vanished. On the other hand, the most immense sums are voted to the Government without a moment's inquiry or opposition.'

A few days before this letter was written (3rd March), the Emperor of the French had pronounced the customary address at the opening of the Chambers for the legislative Session. To speak at such a crisis must have tasked even his great ability in composing manifestoes to the nation. But he was equal to the difficulty. The spirit with which the country had supported him in the war, the great feat of arms achieved at Sebastopol, the English Alliance, the recent visit of the English Queen, the fact that, while France had sent 200,000 men across the sea to the seat of war, she had proved in the Great Exhibition the strength of her resources in the arts of peace, were all touched upon with great skill. Neither was the gallantry of Sardinia forgotten, nor the treaty recently concluded by France and England with Sweden. Finally, adverting to the efforts of Austria to promote a peace, in support of which, he said, advice or petitions were sent to St. Petersburg from all the Cabinets of Europe, he spoke of the Emperor of Russia in graceful terms as 'the inheritor of a situation which he had not brought about, and as seeming to be animated by a sincere desire to put an end to the causes which had occasioned this sanguinary conflict.' While avowing his hope, that the spirit in which the Plenipotentiaries of the belligerent Powers had met to discuss the terms of peace would lead to a favourable result, he guarded himself against the expression of any undue anxiety for such a result, by calling on his people to be equally ready, 'if need be, to unsheathe the sword again, or to offer the hand of friendship to those whom we have fairly fought.'

By the time this address was delivered, Russia had given way upon most of the material points of difference. But on the line of the Bessarabian frontier, she showed great reluctance to yield, and during many days it was uncertain whether an arrangement could be come to. At length, however, a line was agreed upon,[4] and on the 10th of March, Lord Clarendon was able to write to Lord Palmerston, that 'peace might almost be looked upon as a *fait accompli*.'

How the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were to be dealt with had formed one of the subjects discussed at the Conference. Great variety of opinion existed on this question; but instead of dealing with it conclusively in the Treaty of Peace, which might have occasioned considerable delay, it was decided to lay down in the Treaty the principles upon which the settlement was to be made, leaving the application of those principles to form the subject of a supplementary Convention. Accordingly it was provided, that the Principalities should continue to enjoy their existing privileges and immunities under the suzerainty of the Porte, and under the guarantee of the contracting Powers, the Porte engaging to preserve to them an independent and national administration, as well as full liberty of worship, of legislation, of commerce and of navigation.

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[4] When the line came some time afterwards to be traced on the ground, great discussion and difficulty arose as to one part of its course, where, in terms of the Treaty, it was to pass to the south of Bolgrad. It appeared that this would have retained for Russia the town of Bolgrad, which had not been intended by the other parties to the treaty, who had been misled by a map used at the Conference, on which the small town of Tabac was marked as Bolgrad.

The manner in which these provisions were to be carried out led subsequently to much angry controversy, as might have been anticipated from the very opposite views of Austria and the Porte on the one hand, and of France and Russia on the other. The Emperor of the French had very early developed to Lord Clarendon his strong conviction in favour of the union of the Principalities under a sovereign of their own choice. This is Lord Clarendon's report to Lord Palmerston of what passed in a conversation between them on the 6th of March; subsequent events have shown how just were the apprehensions, which were strongly felt by English statesmen and expressed at the time, of the injury to Turkey which was likely to result from the Emperor's proposal:—

'The Emperor said the great fault committed by the Congress of Vienna was that the interests of the sovereigns were only consulted, while the interests of their subjects were wholly neglected; and that the present Congress ought not to fall into a similar error. From all the information that reached him, the Emperor said he was convinced that nothing would satisfy the people of Wallachia and Moldavia but the union of the Principalities under a foreign Prince, who should nevertheless admit the suzerain power of Turkey, and that it would be disgraceful to England and France, if they had not the will or the power to establish a state of things in the Principalities that would be in accordance with the wishes of the people, and manifestly be an improvement upon the feeble attempt at reorganisation that had been proposed at Constantinople.

'I said that I was not prepared to deny that the plan which His Majesty was desirous to adopt might be the best for the Principalities, and I thought it well worthy of consideration, but that there were serious difficulties in the way of its adoption, which could not be overlooked. In the first place, it might not be easy to find a foreign Prince fit for the difficult task he would have to perform, who would admit the suzerainty of the Porte, and he must be either of the Roman Catholic or the Greek religion. If the former, the Greek priests and the people of the Principalities would, from the first moment, be in bitter opposition to him, and, in order to sustain himself, he would have to rely upon Russian aid and influence. If he was of the Greek religion, all his sympathies would be with Russia, and I much feared that we should be establishing another kingdom not unlike Greece, but in a locality where the results would be still more disastrous to Europe. From a conversation which I had had with Count Buol, I had become aware that the objections of Austria to the union of the Principalities were insurmountable, and those of Aali Pasha (the Turkish Plenipotentiary) were not less strong. Indeed, I said, Turkey would have a good right to complain, for she would well know, *that the foreign Prince so established would, within a few years, be able to throw off the suzerainty of the Sultan and become independent.* The same system must also necessarily be established in Servia as in Moldavia and Wallachia; and it would be attended with the same consequences.

'Turkey would thus be deprived of about six millions of her subjects, and her power and position in Europe would be at an end, and I did not see what answer could be given to the Sultan if he appealed to us as the defenders of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire against such an act of spoliation.

'The Emperor said that at all events he wished the subject to be discussed by the Conference.'

It was so discussed, and with the result which we have stated. But that result left a question open, which led not long afterwards to the very brink of an European war.

The tidings which at this time reached the Prince of the precarious state of Baron Stockmar's health put an end to any hope of seeing him in England for some time. On the 16th of March the Prince wrote to him:—

'We have just heard by a letter from uncle Leopold, that you are again ill, and that we must give up the hope of seeing you arrive with him to be present at the Confirmation on Thursday. I need not tell you that this is a great disappointment for us, aggravated besides by the cause which detains you. Had you only come to us for the winter! Coburg does not suit you. . . .'

The Prince then adverts to the death of Herr von Hinkeldey, the President of Police at Berlin, in a duel on the 10th with Herr von Rochow, a young member of the House of Nobles. Herr von Hinkeldey, a most valuable public servant of the King's, had made himself obnoxious to a section of the Prussian nobility by the liberality of his political opinions, as well as by the vigour with which he had carried out local improvements for the health and comfort of the community of Berlin, and still more by having made the aristocratic party feel, that they must hope for no exemption under his rule from the restrictions which were applicable to the rest of the King's subjects. A series of marked slights to himself and his family had culminated in a direct insult to himself by Herr von Rochow, which, according to the Prussian code of honour, left him no alternative but to resign his office and to challenge his assailant. The duel was fought according to strict rule; but the feeling among the middle classes in Berlin, who had looked up to von Hinkeldey as a friend and protector, was, that morally a murder had been committed upon one of the King's most faithful and energetic servants. In reporting the occurrence to Lord Clarendon the same day our Ambassador at Berlin spoke of it as having decidedly a political origin, and one which might possibly 'be the forerunner of something more serious, for the death of this unhappy man is already looked upon by the *Kreuz Zeitung* party as the work of God, and a signal triumph to the *feudal* cause.' It is to this the Prince refers in the next paragraph of his letter:—

'How horrible are these doings in Berlin! The assassination of the Minister Hinkeldey, for one can call it by no other name, is a fresh outrage of the really reckless *Kreuz Partei!* They see in the crime the finger of God, and so adhere to their almost constitutional blasphemy, for the name of God is constantly in their mouths!

'In Paris we are making progress, though slowly, and have reached the threshold of peace. Enemies and allies have combined to make the affair a very difficult one for us, and of subterfuges there is no end. Now Prussia is to be invited to become a party to the general peace, to which we shall very readily assent, so soon as we can feel sure that it is no longer in her power to mar the peace for us.

'The telegraph has just brought the news of the Empress having been safely delivered of a son. Great will be the rejoicing in the Tuileries. . . .'

The tidings which were first received as to the condition of the Empress occasioned considerable anxiety. But writing to Baron Stockmar on the 18th the Prince mentions: 'The accounts from Paris are better. We were in some anxiety about the life of the Empress, whose accouchement has been a more difficult affair than the public were allowed to be told. She has still a great deal of fever.' But a letter to the Queen from Lord Clarendon the same day conveyed the Emperor's assurance that the fever was all but at an end. 'The Emperor's eyes,' Lord Clarendon added, 'filled with tears when he described the tortures of the Empress and his own sensations. He said he hardly knew how to express his gratitude for the interest which Your Majesty had manifested for the Empress, and for the letters which he had received from Your Majesty and the Prince.'

The Emperor wrote his acknowledgments to the Prince on the 20th. We translate the material parts of his letter:—

'Let me thank your Royal Highness for the congratulations you have been so kind as to send me. I received your letter and that of the Queen an hour after I had written to her, so that I do not venture again to weary her with my letters, but I beg you will once more express to her all my gratitude. I have been greatly touched to learn that all your family have shared my joy, and all my hope is, that my son may resemble dear little Prince Arthur, and that he may have the rare qualities of your children. The sympathy shown on this last occasion by the English people is another bond between the two countries, and I hope my son will inherit my feelings of sincere friendship for the Royal Family of England, and of affectionate esteem for the great English nation.'

On the 20th the ceremony of the Confirmation of the Princess Royal took place in the private Chapel of Windsor Castle. The Princess was led in by her father, followed by her godfather the King of the Belgians, and by Her Majesty the Queen. The Royal children and most of the members of the Royal Family were present, and also the Ministers, the great officers of State, the members of the Household, and many of the nobility. The Bishop of Oxford (Wilberforce), Lord High Almoner, read the preface, and the Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony. Next day the Prince wrote to his friend, whose absence on the occasion was deeply felt by the chief actor in the scene:—

'It may cheer you to hear that the Confirmation yesterday went off exceedingly well. The preliminary examination by Wellesley (Dean of Windsor), which came off on Wednesday afternoon in the presence of ourselves, Mama, and the Archbishop, was most satisfactory, and Vicky answered very well and intelligently. At the ceremony of Confirmation yesterday, a number of guests were present, whose names you will see in *The Times*. You were sorely missed by us.

'Everything went off extremely well. . . . This morning we have taken the Sacrament with Vicky, uncle Leopold, and Mama.

'The Peace is to be signed on Monday. It is not such as we could have wished, still, infinitely to be preferred to the prosecution of the war, with the present complication of general policy.

'Windsor Castle, 21st March, 1856,'

The Treaty of Peace was, in fact, signed on Sunday the 30th of March, a day sooner than was originally contemplated, and announced to the public of Paris by a salute of 101 guns. The same day Lord Clarendon reported the fact to the Queen in the following letter:—

'Lord Clarendon presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and humbly begs to congratulate Your Majesty upon the signature of peace this afternoon. It is not to be doubted that another campaign must have brought glory to Your Majesty's arms, and would have enabled England to impose different terms upon Russia, but setting aside the cost and the horror of war, in themselves evils of the greatest magnitude, we cannot feel sure that victory might not have been purchased too dearly . . .

'Lord Clarendon would not make such an assertion lightly, but he feels convinced that Your Majesty may feel satisfied with the position now occupied by England. Six weeks ago it was a painful position here: everybody was against us, our motives were suspected, and our policy was denounced; but the universal feeling now is, that we are the only country able, ready, and willing, if necessary, to continue the war, that we might have prevented peace, but that, having announced our readiness to make peace on honourable terms, we have honestly and unselfishly acted up to our word.

'It is well known, too, that the conditions on which peace is made would have been different if England had not been firm, and everybody is of course glad *even here*, that peace should not have brought dishonour to France.

'Lord Clarendon, therefore, ventures to hope, that the language in England with respect to the peace will not be apologetic or dissatisfied. It would be unwise and undignified, and would invite criticism, if such language were held before the conditions are publicly known.'

To this letter the Queen immediately replied as follows:—

'Windsor Castle, 31st March, 1856.

'The Queen thanks Lord Clarendon much for his two letters of Saturday and yesterday; and we congratulate him on the success of his efforts in obtaining the peace, for to him alone it is due, and also to him alone is due the dignified position the Queen's beloved country holds, thanks to a straightforward, steady, and unselfish policy throughout.[5] . . .

'The Queen finds Lord Palmerston very well pleased with the peace, though he struggled as long as he could for better conditions.'

This most gratifying letter elicited the following reply:—

'Lord Clarendon presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and humbly begs to express his thanks for the letter he received this morning, in which Your Majesty is pleased to approve of his conduct in the negotiations. Lord Clarendon has endeavoured to do his duty and uphold the honour and dignity of England, and, if Your Majesty is satisfied, Lord Clarendon cares absolutely nothing for the attacks which will no doubt be made upon his proceedings. Lord Clarendon is aware of much abuse here of himself for punctiliousness and indifference about peace, or the feelings of the French nation; but, as the Congress admitted that nothing could be carried which the English Plenipotentiaries opposed, the manifestation of ill-will was in fact an acknowledgment of our power. No more striking event occurred than the allusion to Lord Clarendon's speech by the Emperor, when, addressing himself to the whole Congress, His Majesty said, that the signature of the peace that day was the fulfilment of what Lord Clarendon had announced in the name of his Government in the House of Lords; and turning to Lord Cowley and Lord Clarendon he added, that peace had been rendered possible by the spirit of conciliation they had exhibited. It was clearly understood by the Congress (as Lord Clarendon afterwards learned, though he could not doubt it), that in the opinion of the Emperor the question of peace or war had rested with England. The Emperor's remark has produced a great effect. It was uncalled for but generous on the part of the Emperor, and Lord Clarendon trusts that it will be satisfactory to Your Majesty. . . .

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[5] This opinion Her Majesty repeated, in writing next day to the King of the Belgians. Her words were, 'That so good a peace has been obtained, and that this country stands in the high position she now does, by having made peace, and not yielding to unworthy and dishonourable terms, is all owing to Lord Clarendon, whose difficulties were immense, and who cannot be too highly praised.'

'If it would not be too much trouble, Lord Clarendon would venture to ask Your Majesty to write him a few lines that he might read to the Emperor, expressing Your Majesty's satisfaction at his wish to give the Legion of Honour to Lord Cowley and Lord Clarendon, and Your Majesty's regret that no exception can be made for Your Majesty's servants to a rule which applies to all Your Majesty's subjects. It would of course have more weight if Your Majesty were pleased to write this to the Emperor himself, and it would afford an opportunity of saying that Your Majesty is satisfied with the peace, which is a subject upon which Lord Clarendon knows that the Emperor is very anxious. He is also much bent upon the Legion of Honour being accepted, although Lord Clarendon said that he should consider himself disgraced in the eyes of his countrymen, were he to obtain for himself a distinction that it is so often his duty to decline for them.

'Lord Clarendon is just returned from a review given to the Congress. It was a fine sight and the day beautiful. There were certainly not less than 50,000 men in the Champ de Mars . . . .

'Count Walewski has the gold cross of the Legion of Honour, and Baron Bourqueney is made a senator!

'Paris, 1st April, 1856.'

Acting upon Lord Clarendon's suggestion, the Queen lost no time in addressing a letter to the Emperor of the French, of which the following is a translation :—

'Buckingham Palace, 3rd April, 1856.

'Sire and dear Brother—Your Majesty will allow me to offer my warm congratulations on the peace, which has been concluded under your auspices, and this, too, a few days only after the happy event which has given you a son. Although sharing in the feeling of the majority of my people, who think this peace is perhaps a little premature, I feel bound to tell you that I approve highly of the terms in which it is couched, as a result not unworthy of the sacrifices made by us in common during this just war, and as ensuring, so far as this is possible, the stability and the equilibrium of Europe.

'Lord Clarendon has made me aware of your kind intentions towards Lord Cowley and himself, which I accept with real satisfaction, as a proof of your regard for them and of your friendship for myself.

'If, much to my regret, it is impossible for me to grant them permission to accept it, I am sure you will not disapprove of my upholding even in this instance a rule which has been found to be of the highest value for our public service.

'We are happy to learn that the Empress is recovering so well, and that the little Prince thrives to a wish.

'Be so kind, Sire, as to recall us to the Empress's remembrance.

'The Prince begs me to offer you his kindest regards, and I subscribe myself always,

'Sire and dear Brother, Your Majesty's very affectionate sister and friend,

'VICTORIA R.'

To Baron Stockmar, now beginning slowly to recover from the severe illness which detained him at Coburg, the Prince wrote:—

'The peace is signed. Here it has been received with moderate satisfaction; in Paris with exultation. . . . Now our object must be to establish a permanent Military Organisation, on which I am hard at work.'

CHAPTER LXXII.

The Emperor of the French was at pains to mark in private, as he had done in public, the high value which he attached to the English Alliance. A day or two after the Queen's letter of the 3rd of April reached him, an opportunity for this occurred after a dinner at the Tuileries, at which the Plenipotentiaries of the various Powers were present. 'It was impossible,' Lord Clarendon writes (7th April) to the Queen, 'to be more friendly than the Emperor was in his manner, and although he was perfectly civil to Count Orloff, whom he really likes, yet the distinction which he made between Count Orloff and Lord Clarendon could not but strike the spectators, as it was most marked. Lord Clarendon trusts that Your Majesty will not think him capable of supposing that this was personal to himself, or that he adverts to it for any purpose but as a proof that the Emperor is determined to exhibit his adherence to the English Alliance, at a moment when some of his *entourage* would like to make the Russian Alliance *à la mode*.'

In his numerous private interviews with the Emperor Lord Clarendon found that the idea of a re-arrangement of the boundaries of European States, to be carried out by means of an European Congress, had begun to dominate the Emperor's mind. It met with no encouragement from the English Minister. When asked if England would object to such a Congress being assembled, Lord Clarendon met the suggestion by a very practical test of what any conceivable *remaniement* implied. It meant the Rhine for France, to which Prussia would not consent,—the reconstitution of Poland, to which Russia would not listen,—the expulsion of the Austrians from Italy, to which they would never agree,—the reform of the Diet, which Austria would wish to see made more subservient to her own interests,—and the carving out of the minor German States by way of compensation to Austria and Prussia.

Lord Clarendon begged the Emperor to consider what interests and passions, what hopes and fears, would be excited by such a Congress, and the extreme difficulty of carrying out any decisions to which it might come, except by coercion, which would lead to a general war. The Emperor could not dispute this view, and admitted that it would be unwise to think of assembling a Congress, unless three or four of the principal Powers could first settle among themselves what improvements they desired and should be able to carry. At a later interview the Emperor told Lord Clarendon that upon consideration he thought his objections insuperable, and the English Plenipotentiary left Paris under the impression that the idea of an European Congress had been abandoned, and more than ever convinced of the Emperor's 'good faith and honourable intentions.'[1] But it was to be feared that, where the desire to resettle the boundaries of Europe was so strong, the means for giving it effect would sooner or later be sought by working upon the selfish interests and ambition of such of the principal European Powers as were open to persuasion. Of these England was not one, and if the Emperor should at any time enter upon such a line of policy, the unity of counsel and action which had hitherto marked her alliance with the France of the Second Empire would certainly come to an end.

Meanwhile there was no occasion to apprehend such a result, and the Emperor replied to the Queen's letter with all his wonted friendliness and warmth of feeling:—

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[1] This he expressed in the strongest terms in a letter to the Queen on the 18th of April, after his audience of leave with the Emperor.

'Paris, 12th April, 1856.

'Madam and very dear Sister—Your Majesty has given me great pleasure by your assurance that you are satisfied with the peace that has been concluded, for my aim all along has been, while desiring the end of a ruinous war, to act in concert with Your Majesty's Government. No doubt I can quite conceive that it would have been desirable to obtain even better terms, but, carried on as the war had been, was this reasonably to be expected? I confess I think not. . . . I think we should have paid too dearly in every point of view for the advantages we might have obtained. For this reason I am glad of the peace, but especially glad that our alliance comes out of the Conferences intact, and that it is seen by Europe to be as compact as the first day of our union. . . .

'It was with the liveliest satisfaction we have learned that Your Majesty's designs for the happiness of the Princess Royal were soon to be realised. We hear so much good of young Prince Frederick William, that I feel sure your charming daughter will be happy. The Empress, who is looking forward with impatience to the time when she will be able to write to Your Majesty, has been greatly touched by your kind letter. About the beginning of May we shall go to St. Cloud, where the remembrance of you always attends us, for that spot recalls Your Majesty's visit, and the earnest wish for the renewal of an event so auspicious.

'I pray Your Majesty to recall me to the remembrance of Prince Albert, and to receive with favour the assurance of the sentiments of respectful friendship, with which I am Your Majesty's devoted brother and friend,

'NAPOLEON.'

No sooner was the Treaty of Peace signed than Her Majesty conveyed, through Lord Palmerston, to Lord Clarendon and Lord Cowley, her wish to advance each of them a step in the Peerage, in recognition of the conspicuous ability with which they had maintained the interests of England at the Conference. In a letter to Lord Palmerston, declining the honour on behalf of Lord Cowley and himself, for unanswerable private reasons, Lord Clarendon said: 'The Queen's gracious intention is the best proof to Cowley and myself that we have had the good fortune to merit Her Majesty's approbation, and we can aspire to no other or higher reward.' To the Queen herself he wrote a few days afterwards: 'The knowledge that Your Majesty has approved of their conduct is ample and abundant reward for Lord Cowley and himself. Lord Clarendon hopes it is not presumptuous in him to say that he would not exchange Your Majesty's letters of approval for any public mark of Your Majesty's favour.'

A few days afterwards Lord Palmerston himself received the following intimation from Her Majesty, that the most coveted of all honours, the blue ribbon of the Garter, was to be conferred upon him:—

'Buckingham Palace, 11th April, 1856.

'Now that the moment for the ratification of the Treaty of Peace is near at hand, the Queen wishes to delay no longer the expression of her satisfaction as to the manner in which both the war has been brought to a conclusion, and the honour and interests of this country have been maintained by that Treaty under the zealous and able guidance of Lord Palmerston. She wishes as a public token of her approval to bestow the Order of the Garter upon him. Should the two vacant ribbons already have been promised to the Peers, whose names Lord Palmerston has on a former occasion submitted to the Queen, there could be no difficulty in his being named an extra knight, and not filling up the next vacancy which may occur. This course was followed when Lord Grey received the Garter from the hands of King William.'

There were special reasons why Lord Palmerston should feel deeply the generous spirit which prompted this communication. It seems to have filled him with equal surprise and pleasure. This was his reply:—

'Piccadilly, 11th April, 1856.

'Viscount Palmerston presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and is unable to express in words the gratification and thankfulness which he feels upon the receipt of Your Majesty's most gracious and unexpected communication of this morning.

'The utmost of his ambition has been to perform the duties of the high position in which Your Majesty has been pleased to place him, and to prove himself not unworthy of the confidence with which Your Majesty has honoured him. The knowledge that Your Majesty has found no reason to be dissatisfied with your choice, and that his endeavours properly to discharge his duties to Your Majesty and the country have met with Your Majesty's approval, would of itself be an ample reward for any labour or anxiety with which the performance of those duties may have been attended; and therefore the gracious communication which he has this morning received from Your Majesty will be preserved by him as in his eyes still more valuable even than the high honour which it announces as Your Majesty's intention to confer upon him.

'That high and distinguished honour Viscount Palmerston will receive with the greatest pride as a public mark of Your Majesty's gracious approbation, but he begs to be allowed to say, that the task which he and his colleagues have had to perform has been rendered comparatively easy by the enlightened views which Your Majesty has taken of all the great affairs in which Your Majesty's Empire has been engaged, and by the firm and steady support which in all these important transactions Your Majesty's servants have received from the Crown.'

In the midst of the great political movements of the last few months, the thoughts of the Queen and Prince had been much occupied with plans for the future education of Prince Alfred, who had selected the navy for a profession. It was resolved to provide him with a separate establishment, where he could pursue his studies uninterruptedly away from home; and on the choice of a governor to superintend his studies the success of this arrangement in a great measure depended. The Prince had formed a high opinion of the qualifications for the office of Lieutenant Cowell,[2] a young officer of Engineers, who had acted as the Adjutant of Sir Harry Jones both in the Baltic and in the Crimea. What the Prince learned from that distinguished officer satisfied him that no better choice could be made, and he reported the result in the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'The latest news I have to give you about ourselves is, that I have succeeded in getting a distinguished and most amiable young officer of Engineers as Affie's [Prince Alfred's] tutor, one Lieutenant Cowell, who was Adjutant of Sir Harry Jones at Bomarsund, and before Sebastopol, and is well spoken of by everybody. He is only twenty-three, and has had the highest scientific training. By this a great load has been taken off my heart. Cowell comes to us at once to learn the working of our system, and will afterwards take up his quarters with Affie at the Royal Lodge in Windsor Park at Ascot time.

'Things have apparently been brought to a close in Paris. . . . The Emperor has eccentric notions about a future Congress "*pour remanier les traités et la carte de l'Europe.*" But France must first have two years of rest, for there has been a deal of money spent.

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[2] Now Sir John Cowell, K.C.B., Master of the Queen's Household.

'It will amuse you to hear, that while the Chelsea Court of Inquiry is trying our Generals, the French War Ministry have sent a commission to the Crimea to study our hospital system, as the French one has completely broken down. Out of 63,000 men, we have only 5,000 sick, while the French, out of 150,000, have 42,000 sick, of whom 250 die daily, while we lose three.

'The grand review of the Fleet is to come off on the 23rd. The double line of ships will be two miles long.

'Victoria has conferred the Garter on Lord Palmerston, as a recognition for the successful termination of the war and the conclusion of a favourable peace. He is greatly delighted.

'Buckingham Palace, 13th April, 1856.

The news as to the state of the French forces in the Crimea, which had for some time reached England, were of a kind to shake the faith of those who had for the last eighteen months cried up the French army system as superior to our own. Week by week, and month by month, the English soldiers had been getting into finer condition, while the French were being cut down by want of shelter, food, and clothing, and by disease. The results were very obvious at a review of the French and English armies, at which the Russian Generals were present, which took place in the second week of April. In appearance, arrangement, and marching, the English troops were admitted, even by the French officers themselves, to show a decided superiority. As for the artillery, they acknowledged that they had nothing like it. So wrote General Windham, of Redan celebrity, on the 16th of April, in a letter preserved among the Prince's papers, and he added :

'The Russians asserted, that their Artillery horses were better than the French, but admitted they had nothing that could touch us. "*Ah, mon Dieu, quel matériel vous avez!*" exclaimed to me their Chief of the Staff. We had 38,000 under arms, and had we had more notice, more might have been whipped in, and then we should just have turned the 40,000.'[3]

The actual loss of men in the French camp by disease during the early months of this year had been appalling. They were badly housed, and without fresh meat or vegetables. Typhus, scurvy, and consumption decimated their ranks. Their medical staff was miserably deficient, and wholly unfit to grapple with the ravages of disease. The contrast to this state of things in the English camp was so remarkable, that the French Government, as mentioned by the Prince, determined to ascertain how it was occasioned. Accordingly, they sent out M. Baudieux, the Inspector of French Ambulances, to the Crimea to examine the English system on the spot. He made no secret of his conviction, from what he saw there, that the good state of the English army was due to the superiority of the English system. To some one who urged that our Divisional hospitals under regimental surgeons were not so good as one or two great ambulances, his answer, after studying the Divisional returns, was: 'Had you put all these sick together, you would have tripled the deaths—I am certain of it. When a man is sick, if you keep him with the surgeon he is used to, and tend him with the care of his comrades, he does not lose hope. Send him to strangers, and he gives up the game, and sinks rapidly.' One thing which particularly struck M. Baudieux was the efficiency of our hospital attendants (*infirmiers*). When told they were only orderlies, and not trained nurses, 'more marvel,' was his rejoinder. 'Everything is clean and in its place.'

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[3] Some details of great interest as to the straits to which the Russians were reduced, which were gathered upon this occasion from Russian officers, are given in the same letter. The 10 and 13 inch shells used in the defence of Sebastopol had to be carried, two on a bullock, 350 versts. The whole of South Russia was disorganised and brought to the verge of ruin. Thirty-nine thousand men were *hit* in the last three days' bombardment and in the assault; and the Russians had made up their minds to evacuate Sebastopol in two days, even if the assault had not taken place. The Duke of Newcastle's conjecture (see *ante*, p. 364) on this point had therefore been correct. It was also said that 90,000 men had been buried on the north side during the siege. The Russians admitted that the length of their lines of communication had been their ruin; and they put down their loss of men by the war at half-a-million! And this in a war, which Count Orloff (see p. 446 *supra*) admitted to have been a mistake! What a commentary on the familiar line, *Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.*

The record of such facts as these has, with a natural pride, been carefully preserved by the Prince among his voluminous papers relating to the campaign.

The care of the wounded at home had, as we have seen, always engaged the anxious thoughts of the Queen and Prince. From time to time they had inspected the arrangements of the various hospitals at Chatham and elsewhere. On the 16th of April, they again visited Chatham for the same purpose. About 400 convalescents from St. Mary's Hospital were drawn up in the barrack square. After the Queen and Prince had passed through this suffering crowd, cheering them with kind looks and gracious words, they entered the hospital, where all who were able to leave their beds were drawn up. Most of the patients had medals, and some had medals and four clasps. The wounds of many had been frightful, and in the gashed and mutilated figures of these poor fellows, much, and yet only a little, of the ghastly features of war was brought vividly home to the imagination. Those who had been most severely wounded received special notice from Her Majesty, and all were cheered by her kind words, and by the practical interest shown in the arrangements for their comfort.

Two days afterwards, the Queen and Prince visited Aldershot. The growth of the camp there had been closely watched by them from time to time. It was now completed, and the present visit was intended as a formal recognition of the fact. On reaching the camp, Her Majesty exchanged her carriage for a chestnut charger, richly caparisoned, and rode forward to inspect the troops. They mustered to the number of 14,000, drawn up in two lines, and presenting a front of a mile and a half in extent. It was a spirit-stirring sight, as Her Majesty rode down the front line and returned by the rear column, the bayonets flashing as the men presented arms, and the music of the bands of about twenty regiments giving jubilant welcome as she passed. This over, Her Majesty rode to an elevated piece of ground, from which, surrounded by a brilliant suite, she saw the march-past of this fine body of men. The Royal pavilion, which had been constructed for Her Majesty's use, in anticipation of frequent visits to the camp, was occupied on this occasion for the first time, a great field day having been appointed for the following morning. On this occasion Her Majesty again appeared on horseback, wearing the uniform of a Field Marshal, with the star and ribbon of the Garter, and a dark blue riding skirt. The troops, 18,000 strong, were drawn up on the range of barren heights, known as Ladyhouse Common, and, after being minutely inspected by the Queen and Prince, they went through a series of manœuvres on a large scale, under the command of General Knollys, the commander of the camp. After a brilliant day the Court returned in the afternoon to Buckingham Palace.

A few days after (23rd April) they witnessed a still more imposing spectacle, in a review of the magnificent fleet which had been assembled at Spithead. Public expectation had been raised by what had been rumoured of the unexampled force which it represented, and enormous crowds had flocked from all parts of the kingdom for the occasion. The day was fine, every point on the coast from which the fleet could be seen was crowded with spectators, and the waters of the Solent were studded with innumerable yachts and other craft, gay with every species of flag. The Royal yacht steamed out of Portsmouth Harbour at noon, followed by a train of private steamers, decked with flags and crowded with spectators, and passed down and back through the double line of men-of-war. As the yacht wore round to return, the *Duke of Wellington* (131 guns) and the *Royal George* (102 guns), which headed the line, opened a Royal salute and manned yards. As the Queen passed on, all the ships-of-war followed this example, the roar of the guns and the cheering of the men producing an effect of the wildest and most exciting kind. Various evolutions were afterwards executed by the fleet. A mimic attack by the gunboats on Southsea Castle concluded the proceedings, after which the Queen and Prince returned to London.

Two days afterwards the Prince wrote to Baron Stockmar:—

'I write to you on this, Alice's thirteenth birthday. I am heartily glad you are again so much better, and that your daughter's state begins to justify fresh hopes.[4]

'The day before yesterday was the great naval review at Spithead, a wonderful sight! 240 ships-of-war; viz. 24 ships of the line, 19 screw frigates, 18 paddlewheel steamers, 4 floating batteries, 120 steam gunboats, 1 sailing frigate, 2 ammunition ships, 1 hospital ship, 1 floating workshop, 50 mortar boats. To this was added our suite of 30 steamers, and the sea was quite covered with private steam and sailing vessels. At Portsmouth there were somewhere about 100,000 spectators. The day was superb, and everything passed off without the slightest accident.

'Lord Clarendon has returned from Paris, and has a great deal that is interesting to tell. . . . Count Cavour likewise gave me a great deal of information. He came over from Paris to the naval review, and returns at once to Turin. We are to get Brunnow here again as the Russian Ambassador. . . .[5]

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[4] Baron Stockmar's daughter died in the following month.

[5] Baron Brunnow came to England on the 2nd of May on a special mission

'Lord Cowper's sudden death has thrown the house of Palmerston into deep mourning, and marred his happiness at receiving the Garter from Victoria. . . . Our army has begun to return, and it will require redoubled exertions to keep up its organisation. I am constantly at work to this end, but find scanty support. . . .

'Lieutenant Cowell fits into his place admirably, and is an universal favourite. . . .

'Buckingham Palace, 25th April, 1856.'

The fear that the vital question of putting the peace establishment of the army on such a footing as to admit of its being extended with ease to meet the exigencies of war would be laid on the shelf, now that the war was at an end, was one which the Prince knew from experience was not without foundation. Even before the Treaty of Peace was signed, the Cabinet was considering what retrenchments could be made in the Army and Navy. On the 12th of April, the Queen wrote to Lord Palmerston upon the subject, expressing her trust and expectation, that these retrenchments would be made 'with great moderation, and very gradually, and that the difficulties we had had and the sufferings which we had endured might not be forgotten. To the miserable reductions of the last thirty years,' Her Majesty added, 'are entirely owing our state of helplessness when the war began, and it would be unpardonable if we were to be found in a similar condition when another war—and who can tell how soon there may be one?—breaks out. . . . We ought and must be prepared for every eventuality, and we have splendid material in that magnificent little army in the Crimea.'

The Prince had addressed himself to the question with his usual thoroughness, and he embodied his views upon the

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to the Queen; but Count Creptowitch was the Ambassador accredited to the English Court.

whole question in a Memorandum reviewing the defects of the old army system, and suggesting the remedies to be applied, which occupies no fewer than twenty-eight printed folio pages. In a private Memorandum dated 7th of March, he states his reasons for taking up the subject, thus:—'I saw no intention on the part of anybody to grapple with this question, and therefore drew up a Memorandum embodying the outlines of the measures I consider necessary. Having asked Lord Hardinge to appoint a Commission of general officers to consider them, he has declared his preference for undertaking the preparation of a plan, by his own Staff, at the Horse Guards. I have given a copy of the Memorandum to him, and Sir George Wetherall and Sir Richard Airey are occupied with drawing up the plan.' The Prince thus laid the foundation for having something done, and the result was that a very complete scheme was drawn up by Lord Hardinge by the end of April, from which the Prince anticipated that good practical results might ensue. This was all he wished, for his only purpose was to ensure, if possible, that the army of England might be worthy of the country's position among the nations. The disposal of its patronage, or the advancement of individuals, with which he was frequently accused of interfering, were matters which he regarded as wholly beyond his province, and with which he therefore gave himself no concern.

The feeling of indignation in the country at Kars having been suffered to fall, through want of support to its brave defenders, was so great, that it was not to be expected the subject would be allowed to drop without a debate in Parliament. For three nights the House of Commons was occupied in discussing a motion of Mr. Whiteside's, in which the disaster was attributed to the want of foresight and energy on the part of the English Government. In this debate the terms of the Treaty of Peace naturally came under discussion, and met upon the whole with approval, and the motion, for which probably all felt there was some foundation, but not enough to justify a censure, which would have been most inopportune, was negatived by a majority of 127 in a very full house on the 30th of April.

On the 5th of May, the consideration of the Treaty of Peace occupied the attention of the House of Lords. In moving an Address to Her Majesty, expressive of satisfaction with its terms, Lord Ellesmere opened the debate in a speech remarkable for many passages of great beauty and eloquence. His tribute to the memory of Lord Raglan was much admired:—

> 'Through that awful winter of complicated trials, such as no army I ever heard or read of endured and survived, there was one spell, which stood between that host and its destruction. That spell was confidence in its leader. From that humble abode, the head-quarters of Lord Raglan, there radiated a moral force, a serene and unquenchable spirit of faith, and trust, and duty, which did resist, and which alone could have resisted, the combined influences of weather, privation, and fatigue, superadded to the constant changes of a defective military position, threatened in front, flank, and rear, by a brave, and able, and outnumbering enemy. The spell prevailed; not even discomfiture, far less disgrace—for discomfiture and even destruction under such circumstances might have come without disgrace—fell on the banners of England.'

The speaker then passed, by a beautiful transition, to the mention of a name, that had become a treasured household word throughout the land:—

> 'My lords, the agony of that time has become matter of history. The vegetation of two successive springs has obscured the vestiges of Balaclava and Inkermann. Strong voices now answer to the roll-call and sturdy forms now cluster round the colours. The ranks are full, the hospitals are empty. The angel of mercy still lingers to the last on the scene of her labours; but her mission is all but accomplished. Those long arcades of

Scutari in which dying men sat up to catch the sound of her footstep or the flutter of her dress, and fell back on the pillow content to have seen her shadow as it passed, are now comparatively deserted. She may probably be thinking how to escape as best she may, on her return, the demonstrations of a nation's appreciation of the deeds and motives of Florence Nightingale.'[6]

Lord Clarendon had not much difficulty in vindicating the Treaty which he had negotiated from the attacks which were made upon it on the other side of the House. It was supported by Lord Aberdeen as a peace wise and honourable in itself, though he added that it was one which, if it had been made under his own auspices, might perhaps have 'produced discontent and excited serious reprehension.' The Address was agreed to without a division. The House of Commons the same evening, after a lengthened debate, adopted the same course, and upon the 8th of May the members of both Houses went in procession to Buckingham Palace to present the Addresses to the Queen. In the evening the happy close of the war was signalised by a great ball in the new ball-room at Buckingham Palace, which had just been completed, and was now used for the first time.

Two days afterwards the Court retreated for a few days to Osborne, from which the Prince, on the 12th of May, wrote to Baron Stockmar:—

'We have run into our haven of rest for a couple of days, and the spring looks as if it meant to begin at last. So we have some prospect of getting our nerves restrung. Mine were sadly depressed by constant worry, and a severe cold.

'Brunnow was touching, shed tears in profusion, but especially about his not staying here,[7] Count Creptowitch being appointed to come in his place.

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[6] This was Lord Ellesmere's last public appearance. He died in the following year.

[7] On the 6th of April the Queen writes to King Leopold:—'On the 3rd we received Brunnow, who was so nervous, and so *ému*, that he could hardly

'Grey starts to-day for the Russian Court, as bearer of the written answer to the intimation of the Emperor Alexander's accession to the throne. As the Emperor Napoleon has sent Edgar Ney, a General, and his aide-de-camp and personal friend, Clarendon thought Grey was the right person for us. He is pleased to go, and will be able to tell us a great deal when he returns. If he have time, I have asked him to take Coburg on his way back, to see you, and, if possible, bring you with him. In this way we must at least learn something about you. . . .

'The debates on the peace have been very favourable to the Ministry. The transports from the Crimea are now arriving daily. On the 19th we are to lay the foundation-stone for the new military hospital on the Southampton River.'

It was only by comparison with the ceaseless strain of London life that Osborne was a 'haven of rest.'

On the day this letter was written the Prince went to Portsmouth to inspect the 8th Hussars, who had just returned from the Crimea. On his way he passed the vessel which had conveyed Lord Dalhousie to England from his Vice-royalty in India. Knowing the freight she bore, the Prince caused her to be hailed from the Royal yacht, in hopes of exchanging salutations with the ex-Viceroy, who was known to have left India much broken in health. But Lord Dalhousie was below at the moment, and as his state was such that he could only reach the deck by being hoisted through the hatchway, the Royal yacht had passed before this could be done. No sooner, however, did the Prince reach Osborne than a letter of welcome was despatched by the Queen to the

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speak. He dines with us to-night, and the dinner is given for him, being a curious collection of antagonistic elements: Granville, Clarendon, Lansdowne, Aberdeen, Graham, John Russell, Derby, and Malmesbury,—"the happy family" I call them.'

statesman, who had served his country so well. What was the tenor of that letter may be judged from the language of Lord Dalhousie's reply next day, conveying the expression of his gratitude for the message 'which Your Majesty was pleased to transmit to him this morning, and the surpassing kindness and condescension which Your Majesty has shown in the letter he has since had the honour of receiving.'

> 'Such gracious words,' Lord Dalhousie added, 'from a sovereign to a subject, as those with which Your Majesty has greeted his return to England, create emotions of gratitude too strong and deep to find fitting expression in any other than the simplest words. Lord Dalhousie therefore respectfully asks permission to thank Your Majesty from his inmost heart for the touching and cheering welcome home, which he feels to be the crowning honour of his life.
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> 'In reply to Your Majesty's inquiry Lord Dalhousie begs leave to state that he has now no illness excepting great weakness; but the infirmity of an injured limb, which has harassed him now for some years, renders him at present unable to walk or stand. What the end of it may be Lord Dalhousie cannot tell; but, whatever it may be, he ventures to say, that Your Majesty's present most gracious words will be balm for it all.'

These 'gracious words' were but the climax of many, which had told Lord Dalhousie, during his Viceroyalty, of his Sovereign's approval. Balm as they were, they could not stay the progress of the malady, which not long after added his name to the noble roll of British statesmen who have fallen martyrs to their devotion to duty in the East.[8]

On the 19th of May the Queen crossed from Osborne to Netley to lay the foundation stone of the great Military

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[8] The Queen and Prince saw Lord Dalhousie in Edinburgh on the 15th of October of this year, as they were returning from Balmoral. They found him, says the Prince's Diary, less changed and less of an invalid than they had been led to expect. His eight years in India had, however, undermined his constitution. He died 19th December, 1860, at the age of 58.

Hospital there. Writing to the King of the Belgians next day, Her Majesty says :—

'Osborne, 20th May, 1856.

'Last week, but particularly on Sunday, it blew a fearful gale, and, if it had not moderated, we could not have performed the interesting ceremony of laying the first stone of a large Military Hospital near Netley, the first of the kind in this country, and which is to bear my name and be one of the finest in Europe. Loving my dear brave army as I do, and having seen so many of my poor sick and wounded soldiers. I shall watch over this work with maternal anxiety.'

The next day brought tidings of the death of Baron Stockmar's daughter. On this the Prince wrote to him :—

'Your son has communicated to us the sad tidings of your daughter's death, which has caused us great regret. Although her death must be a release from severe suffering, there is little comfort in that thought for a father's heart. I trust your own health may not be injured by this mournful event.

'Fritz of Prussia came here yesterday. He looks well and cheerful, and is very happy to be with his bride elect again.

'On the 26th we return to London; and the day after we expect a visit from the Prince Regent of Baden.[9]

'Osborne, 22nd May, 1856.'

By this time Parliament had reassembled after the Whitsuntide recess, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had submitted his budget to the House of Commons. In this the House had to face the settlement of the bill for the war. The expenditure for the past year had been 88,428,355*l.*, being 22,723,854*l.* in excess of the revenue. In his statement Sir George Cornewall Lewis showed, that comparing the two years before the war with the two years of the war, the excess of expenditure due to the war was 53,088,711*l.*, but that, adding to this the estimated excess of expenditure for the current year, the war might be computed to have cost England, in the three years, no less a sum than 77,588,000*l.* He calculated there would be a deficiency of nearly 7,000,000*l.* upon the current year, which he proposed to meet by borrowing. This being the state of the account, while the Government proposed to raise no new taxes, it was obvious that no existing source of revenue could be abandoned or diminished. This very unwelcome announcement was accepted by the House with the submission due to incontrovertible necessity. Strong observations were made, as might have been expected, as to the propriety of reducing the army estimates, Mr. Disraeli stating with general assent, that the sound principle to be aimed at, 'was to possess a perfect military system, and rather a model than a large force.' But no division was taken on the Resolutions, and the Budget passed in the form proposed by the Government.

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[9] Writing to Baron Stockmar on the 6th of June, the Prince speaks of the Prince Regent of Baden thus: 'I have found in him the ablest young man I have ever met. He has employed his time here admirably in the study of politics, and I have seen a great deal of him.'

A long-standing difficulty with the American Government, arising out of an alleged violation of their law in the enlistment in the United States of recruits for the English army under the Foreign Enlistment Act, had at this time reached such a point, that the American Government had dismissed Mr. Crampton, our Minister at Washington. No serious consequences were apprehended, as will be seen from the Prince's letter presently to be quoted. Still the incident was unpleasant. Tact and good temper, however, on both sides healed the breach. Direct diplomatic relations between the countries were for a time suspended; but on the 16th of March, 1857, Lord Napier having been appointed Mr. Crampton's successor, presented his credentials at Washington, and was duly received by the new President, Mr. Buchanan.

On his way back from St. Petersburg, General Grey had visited Baron Stockmar, and brought back cheering accounts of his health. These were very welcome to the Prince, who, on the 6th of June, thus writes to his friend:—

'I was extremely glad to receive so good an account of you through Grey. His presence will have brought us forcibly to your remembrance, and I hope may even have aroused the wish to pay us another visit, when you are better. To give your health a fair chance, you ought to have recourse to change of air and scene as quickly as possible,—Sir James Clark regards this as indispensable.

'The Americans have sent away our Minister, but accompanied the act with such assurances of friendship and affection, and of their perfect readiness to adjust all points in difference in conformity with our wishes, that it will be difficult to give theirs his *congé* in return.

'. . . . Palmerston rode to the races and back for exercise.'

When next the Prince wrote to his friend at Coburg, it was to tell him of an accident to the Princess Royal, which he would on no account have had him learn from any one but himself. The letter speaks for itself:—

'I write to you to-day to inform you of an accident, which might have been very disastrous, but which, thank God, has passed off happily, as I should not wish you to get your first tidings of it from the papers. Vicky was sealing a letter at her table, and was all at once in flames, her sleeve having caught fire at the candle. Miss Hildyard was luckily seated at the same table, and Mrs. Anderson was in the room giving Alice her music lesson. They sprang at once to her assistance, and extinguished the flames with the hearthrug. Nevertheless, her right arm is severely burnt from below the elbow to the shoulder. Sir Benjamin Brodie has examined the wound closely with the microscope, and is satisfied that, except on a small spot on the upper part of the arm, the lower skin is uninjured, and that no permanent disabling of the arm is therefore to be dreaded. The poor child showed very great self-possession and presence of mind at the time, and great courage under the pain. She is quite cheerful, her appetite is good, and she looks well.

'Naturally we were very much alarmed, and the poor bridegroom quite upset, when he heard of it. It occurred yesterday afternoon about four, at the very time we were engaged at a Council. Had assistance not been so near, and had all parties not shown so much presence of mind, this accident would in all probability have had a tragic ending, for it is impossible to form any idea of the rapidity with which the muslin must have burned. As it is, the worst will be a tedious and painful cure, and we may hope no marks will be left behind. Clark shall keep you advised of the progress of the patient. . . .

'The bridegroom goes away the day after to-morrow; the day after that comes uncle Leopold, with Charlotte and Philip, and he is to leave us on the 9th, and to be succeeded on the 10th, by the Prince and Princess of Prussia.

'Buckingham Palace, 25th June, 1856.'

We have said, that the Crown Princess had always been a special favourite with Baron Stockmar. Writing of her in a letter quoted in his Memoirs (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 43), he says, 'From her youth upwards I have loved her, have always expected great things from her, and taken all pains to be of service to her. I hold her to be exceptionally gifted in many things, even to the point of genius.' Such being his feeling, not even the comforting assurances of the Prince seem to have broken the shock of an accident, which his medical experience told him might prove so perilous to the patient's system. There is something peculiarly touching in the few words of the kind old man's letter in reply :—

'I have just received your Royal Highness's letter of the 25th inst. This is a terrible year, in which blow upon blow smites me. With feelings of deepest affection I have hung upon this child for years. God will have mercy—I am in a manner crushed to the earth.

'Let me have very frequent tidings. I need not remind the doctors that burns of this kind frequently leave the nervous system for long afterwards in a state of extreme weakness.

'28th June, 1856.'

Happily, all apprehension of permanent injury from the accident was soon removed; and so early as the first of August the Prince's Diary contains this entry: 'Vicky's arm now quite healed.'

CHAPTER LXXIII.

By this time the great body of the English troops had returned from the Crimea, and numerous reviews and inspections by the Queen and Prince took place during the month of July, at Aldershot, Woolwich, and London.[1] A brilliant field day, which had been looked for at Aldershot on the 8th, was greatly marred by miserable weather. The Royal party, which included the King of the Belgians and Prince Oscar of Sweden, had passed the night at the Pavilion there. The ground was soaking, and the heavy masses of clouds forbade all hope of a cessation of the pitiless rain. Nevertheless, the troops turned out with alacrity, and bore the pelting of the storm with Crimean fortitude. The Queen arrived upon the ground in a close carriage, in attendance on which rode Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, the King of the Belgians, the Comte de Flandres, the Duke of Cambridge, and Lord Panmure, all in military uniform. After the usual evolutions had been gone through, a short but happy break in the weather occurred. Then followed a scene of unusual interest. The Crimean regiments advanced, and formed three sides of a square round the Royal carriage. The officers who had been under fire, together with four men of each company and troop, stepped forward; the Queen's carriage was thrown open, and Her Majesty rose, and addressed them as follows:—

'Officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers! I wish personally to convey through you, to the regiments assembled here this day, my hearty welcome on their return to England in health and full efficiency. Say to them, that I have watched anxiously over the difficulties and hardships which they have so nobly borne, that I have mourned with deep sorrow for the brave men who have fallen in their country's cause, and that I have felt proud of that valour, which, with their gallant allies, they have displayed on every field.

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[1] On the 16th of July Sir William Codrington sailed from Balaclava with the last of the English troops.

'I thank God, that your dangers are over, while the glory of your deeds remains; but I know, that should your services be again required, you will be animated with the same devotion, which in the Crimea has rendered you invincible.'

What ensued is thus described by the chronicler of *The Times*:—

'No sooner had Her Majesty concluded this brief harangue, which she delivered with that propriety of emphasis, and that silvery sweetness of intonation for which she is so remarkable, than a cry of "God save the Queen!" sprang to every lip. Helmets, bearskins, and shakos were thrown into the air, the dragoons waved their sabres, and a shout of loyal acclamation, caught up from line to line, rang through the hills. It was a grand and spirit-stirring sight, full of interest and excitement, and not to be witnessed without deep emotion.'

Next day, all London was on the alert to welcome the Guards on their return from the Crimea. They marched from the Nine Elms Station over Vauxhall Bridge, along the river embankment, by the Houses of Parliament, and through St. James's Park, past Buckingham Palace, from the centre balcony of which they were seen by the Queen, and thence up Constitution Hill to Hyde Park. Here they were met by the Prince, who was waiting in command of the Home battalion of the Guards to receive them. Soon after Her Majesty reached the Park. There was neither rain to damp, nor clouds to obscure the brilliancy of a review, in which both the men and the spectators were full of natural enthusiasm, and the spectacle, being as it were the closing act of the war, produced an effect far beyond that of any ordinary review. This, the Prince seems to have felt, if we may judge by what he says of it in writing to Baron Stockmar next day :—

'Yesterday uncle Leopold took his departure with his children, after being present at the state reception of the Guards. The review of the seven battalions, four of the Household and three of the Crimean troops, was truly superb, and made a deep impression upon us all. An inspection at Aldershot the day before of other regiments from the Crimea had been greatly marred by the rain.

'The previous day we had the great pain of seeing Lord Hardinge struck by paralysis during an audience with Victoria. He fell forward upon the table before which he was standing. I assisted him to the nearest sofa, where he at once resumed what he was saying with the greatest clearness and calmness, merely apologising "that he had made such a disturbance." I remarked that he was in great pain, which he ascribed to a strain. When we moved him to go home, it turned out that the whole of his right side was affected. He is now quiet in town, very courageous and composed, but still disabled, and we have lost one of our most important public servants, whom I know not how we are to replace. . . .

'Buckingham Palace, 10th July, 1856.'

Lord Hardinge had brought with him to Aldershot, to submit to Her Majesty, the Report, just issued, of the Military Commission which had been sitting at Chelsea. The result of their investigations had been completely to exonerate the various officers of the blame which had been cast upon them by the report of Sir John MacNeill and Colonel Tulloch; and Lord Hardinge was in the act of discussing it with the Queen and Prince, when he was seized with paralysis, as described by the Prince. A letter from Lord Panmure (9th July) to the Prince, conveyed the unwelcome tidings, that it was to be feared Lord Hardinge's public career was at an end, and this was confirmed next day by a letter from himself to the Queen tendering his resignation. 'Lord Hardinge,' he added, 'cannot take this step without thanking Your Majesty for the great consideration and support which he has at all times received, at a period of no ordinary difficulty, and which have impressed him with such sentiments of gratitude as can only cease with his life.'

The acceptance of this resignation was accompanied by such words as might have been expected from the Sovereign to so old and able a servant. 'The loss of Lord Hardinge's services,' Her Majesty wrote, 'will be immense to the Queen, the country, and the army, and she trusts, that he is well assured of her high sense of the very valuable services he has rendered. She hopes, however, that she may still reckon on his advice and assistance on matters of importance, though he will no longer command her noble army. She cannot conclude without expressing the Prince's and her own fervent wishes that he may rapidly recover, and his valuable life be long preserved to all his friends, amongst whom we shall ever consider ourselves.'

These wishes were not to be realised. Lord Hardinge never thoroughly rallied, and he died on the 24th of September following.

On the 12th of July, Lord Palmerston informed the Queen that the Cabinet had come to the conclusion, that in the appointment of a successor to Lord Hardinge, Her Majesty's choice 'could not fall upon any General Officer better suited to that important position than his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge.' This suggestion having met with the Queen's approval, the appointment was made, and was received by the public with general satisfaction.

A visit from the Prince and Princess of Prussia (the present Emperor and Empress of Germany), from the 10th to the 28th of August, served to draw closer the relations with the English Royal Family, which were soon to be cemented by the marriage of the Princess Royal with their son, the public announcement of which had by this time been made both in Germany and in England. After judging for himself, in reviews at Woolwich and at Aldershot, of the strength and efficiency of the army to which we should have trusted for carrying on the war, the Prince of Prussia went with his hosts to Osborne on the 18th, to share the quiet of their 'haven of rest.' On the 29th, these valued visitors left Osborne, and the same day Parliament was prorogued by commission.

A few days before (21st July), great fêtes at Brussels had taken place in commemoration of the establishment of the Belgian monarchy twenty-five years before. They had passed off with a display of affectionate enthusiasm for the King, to whom so much of the prosperity of the kingdom was due, which, we gather from the Prince's journal, had afforded very great pleasure to the Queen and to himself. Writing some days before to Baron Stockmar, after telling him that Lord Westmoreland had been appointed by the Queen to carry the congratulations of England to King Leopold upon the occasion, the Prince added, 'This solemnity must be especially pleasant to you, for you may with justice look upon Belgium as in a great measure your handiwork. That country is, moreover, *the only* satisfactory child of the new epoch.'

The Court remained at Osborne until the 27th of August, the Queen and Prince making occasional excursions by sea, among others, one to the West Coast, as far as Devonport, where they were compelled by continuous stormy weather to leave the yacht and return through Exeter and Salisbury by rail to Portsmouth. Leaving Osborne on the 27th, and halting for two days in Edinburgh on the way, the Court reached Balmoral on the 30th. 'On arriving at seven o'clock in the evening,' the Queen writes in her Diary, 'we found the tower finished as well as the offices, and the poor old house gone! The effect of the whole is very fine.' The laying out of the terraces and pleasure-grounds to the west of the house, for which instructions had been given by the Prince the previous year, was also completed, and, as he briefly notes, most satisfactorily (*Alles sehr gelungen*).

He had hoped that Baron Stockmar would have come to England in time to accompany the Court to Balmoral. But the Baron lingered on in Coburg, much to the disappointment of his friends.

'You are wrong,' the Prince wrote to him (3rd September), 'not to be with us, for just now it is extraordinarily fine here, the air pure and bracing, such as you want, and the house is pleasant and comfortable. Seize the first moment you feel yourself well enough to put yourself on the road hitherward. If you do not come now, but let the autumn overtake you again in Coburg, which you will have to expiate by a winter full of suffering there, then I am afraid, as you have now entered on your seventieth year, that we shall never see you here again, which even you must regret. For your recent birthday I beg with all sincerity you will accept my good wishes.

'Our justification for inviting and beseeching you again and again to come to us is strengthened by everything you say in your letter, for it is only too true that "no clear, comprehensive, practical understanding can be arrived at through letters, which on the contrary perplex, confuse, and do harm;" that we have before us great, important, and grave matters to discuss, requiring the most deliberate and tactical treatment, which can only be based upon the most direct and explicit knowledge of facts.'

The fine weather spoken of in this letter soon gave way, and was succeeded by mist, rain, snow, and great cold, which marred not a little the pleasure of the excursions among the hills by the Queen and her guests. They did not, however, prevent the Prince from pursuing his favourite sport of deer-stalking, and his Diary, in the midst of entries of rain, snow, flood, and tempest, which made that year a sad one for the farmers of Deeside, records the fall to his rifle of a goodly number of stags.

Among the visitors at Balmoral during the autumn not the least honoured was Miss Florence Nightingale. On the 21st of September she was introduced to the Queen and Prince by Sir James Clark, with whom she was then staying at Birkhall. 'She put before us,' is the brief entry in the Prince's Diary, 'all the defects of our present military hospital system, and the reforms that are needed. We are much pleased with her; she is extremely modest. (*Sie gefällt uns sehr—ist sehr bescheiden.*)' About a fortnight afterwards Miss Nightingale became the Queen's guest, the time of her visit being so fixed as to give Lord Panmure, who was then at Balmoral, an opportunity of learning from her own lips the story of what she had seen, and the conclusions she had drawn from her great and remarkable experience in the East.

When the Prince next wrote to Baron Stockmar, he could not quicken his friend's regrets for having been detained in Coburg by telling him again of the fine weather, of which he had spoken on his arrival at Balmoral. The day the following letter was written, the Prince's Diary records: 'Rain and frightful gale—the Dee swollen to an incredible degree.'

'I take up the pen on one of our rainy days, the most comfortless, perhaps, of the many we have had this year. In this respect you have lost less by not coming to us; still the air, which, when the weather is barely tolerable, is quite glorious to breathe, would have done you much good. You cannot fail to remark that, whenever I write to you, two wishes instantly force themselves upon me, viz., that you ought to be better, and that you ought to be with us. You, too, are no doubt warmly animated by these wishes also; still, I fear, your faith is not so strong as ours, that you would be better, if you were here—a faith of which I make the most unqualified profession, because I hold moral and intellectual nourishment, excitement, and activity, to be vital requisites for your bodily well-being. So make your plan for coming to us forthwith, and let me know how I can aid in it. We shall be at Windsor again the beginning of next month; you will thus have some days to ponder the matter before winter surprises you in Coburg, where you ought on no account to spend it. . . .

'In general politics there is uncertainty and irresolution everywhere. The Coronation in Moscow is an apotheosis and homage paid to the vanquished, and which cannot fail to inspire both worshipper and worshipped with dangerous illusions in regard to the real state of things.[2] The efforts made by Russia to gain over France, and to separate us from her, are incredible. France is not inclined to break with us, but she is ready to make every possible sacrifice for Russia at the expense of the Porte, and to this we cannot agree. We have to contend *single-handed* for the fulfilment of the Paris treaty, an uphill game under such circumstances.

'It seems that Russia's money powers, which are commonly called resources, are not exhausted, but, on the other hand, that her force in men is very much so, and that of the old army scarcely anything exists except the Guards, and what is left is bad; it also seems, that the Emperor is well disposed to and desirous of reform.

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[2] The Coronation of the Emperor Alexander took place at Moscow on the 7th of September. Earl Granville represented England upon the occasion.

'Have you read Tocqueville's *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution?* I devour the book, from which I anticipate the greatest influence upon the future, showing, as it does, how bureaucratic central government was not the cure for the evils of the Great Revolution, but their direct cause! Many of the facts were quite new to me. . . .

'Bertie will have started yesterday from Osborne on his incognito tour. May the experiment succeed![3]

'We have Lord Aberdeen on a visit for three days; he looks *aged*, but well, and desires to be remembered to you.

'Balmoral, 24th September, 1856.'

The difficulties referred to in this letter of obtaining the fulfilment by Russia of the terms of the Treaty of Peace, had been for some time the subject of very serious diplomatic controversy. The complaints urged by the British Government were numerous. Thus, for example, it had been expressly stipulated that the fortress and district of Kars were to be restored to Turkey; but instead of evacuating both, and leaving the fortress in the condition in which it was at the time the treaty was signed, the Russians had demolished it, while at the same time they increased the occupying force in the country, and kept it there for a lengthened period. They had in the same way destroyed the fortifications of Ismail and Reni within that part of Bessarabia which, under the Treaty, was to have been surrendered to Turkey,—an act ot gratuitous injury to the Turks, as putting them to the expense of reconstructing the works. These, however, were violations of the Treaty, which might be complained of, and were sure to create bitter feelings, but could not be redressed. More serious, however, was an attempt by Russia to obtain possession of Serpent's Island at the mouth of the Danube, although that was clearly outside of the new Bessarabian frontier line, which had been settled by the Treaty, and also to alter that line by insisting that it should be carried to the south, not of the old Bolgrad shown upon the map used at the Conferences, but of the new Bolgrad,—a change which would have defeated the object of this part of the treaty, namely, the exclusion of Russia from direct access to the Danube. Unreasonable delays in fixing the boundary line were also alleged to have taken place on the part of the Russian Commissioners.

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[3] This was a walking tour in the West of England with Mr. Gibbs, his tutor, and Colonel Cavendish, one of the Queen's grooms in waiting.

Thus matters stood for several months at a deadlock. The English Government had thought it necessary to send a fleet into the Black Sea, and had made it known that it should remain there until the stipulations of the Treaty were carried out. The immediate cause of this step was the delay in the evacuation of Kars, and so serious was the view taken by the English Government of the action of Russia in this respect, that it was only upon the assurance that no further delay would take place, that they had decided upon sending a representative to the Emperor's Coronation. Russia professed to be greatly surprised that England should have taken singly the step of ordering her fleet into the Black Sea in reference to a treaty to which she was only one of several contracting parties. But Count Creptowitch's reclamations on this head only elicited the answer, that we considered we were acting within our right, and should again act in the same manner, should any further occasion for doing so be given. In the Black Sea accordingly our fleet remained, until the other questions in dispute to which reference had been made were settled—a result not arrived at until after the exchange of much ‘angry parle’ in the courteous phraseology of diplomatic conflict.

A fresh source of European trouble had in the meantime arisen, where it might least have been expected. On the 2nd of September, a band of armed men calling themselves Royalists, headed by the Count de Pourtales, attacked and took possession of the Castle of Neuchâtel, the seat of government of the Canton of that name. They professed to be acting in the interests of the King of Prussia, and for the vindication of his sovereign rights over the Canton. These rights were based upon a feudal relation which had subsisted between the principality of Neuchâtel and the House of Brandenburg from 1707 down to 1806, when France overran Switzerland, and the principality was conferred by Napoleon upon Marshal Berthier, who thereupon assumed the title of Prince of Neuchâtel-Wagram. In September 1814, Neuchâtel was admitted into the Swiss Confederation, but at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the sovereign rights of the King of Prussia over the Canton were recognised and confirmed. Down to 1848 nothing occurred to raise a question as to the nature and extent of these rights; but in that year Neuchâtel determined to identify itself more closely with the Swiss Confederation, and to adopt a constitution of the same republican character as that of the other Cantons. At the same time doubts were set up as to the seignorial rights of the King of Prussia, and, to settle the controversy, a conference of the five Great European Powers was held in London in 1852. By a formal protocol, dated 24th May of that year, they recognised the sovereignty of the King of Prussia, and in this obviously very unsatisfactory position matters had remained until the Royalist attack on the Castle of Neuchâtel, of which we have spoken, again called the attention of Europe to the question.

On hearing of the attack the Swiss Federal Council immediately sent several battalions of Federal troops to the scene of action. The result, as might have been expected, was a total defeat of the Royalists, and on the 4th of September the Republican flag was again hoisted on the Castle of Neuchâtel, from which it had been dragged down only two days before. Twelve of the Royalists were killed, and upwards of a hundred taken prisoners.

As the King of Prussia had not in his own name and person thought it necessary to take extreme measures for the assertion of his rights within the Canton, it might have been expected that he would not have shown much concern for those who had put themselves forward without authority as the champions of his cause. On the contrary, however, he now claimed the exclusive right to deal with them, and demanded from the Swiss Confederation the unconditional surrender of the prisoners. This demand was formally made on the 18th of November, and supported, in the name of the German Diet, by the accredited representatives of Austria, Bavaria, and Baden. The demand was refused. The Federal Council appealed to the Emperor of the French; but he, having at the time grievances of his own against the Confederation for affording an asylum to the bitterest assailants of his person and government, so far from encouraging this appeal, showed a disposition to support the King of Prussia, even to the extent of measures of coercion. The King, in opening the Prussian Chambers on the 29th of November, spoke of such measures as imminent, and for a time it seemed as if war between Prussia and Switzerland were inevitable. Happily this was prevented by the good offices of Great Britain, France, Austria, and Russia; and the possibility of future quarrel was averted by a Treaty of Mediation, concluded in April 1857, under which the King of Prussia renounced his rights of sovereignty in the principality of

Neuchâtel on behalf of himself and his successors, in consideration of a payment to him by the Helvetic Confederation of a million of francs.

This quarrel was still in its initial stage when the Prince wrote the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'All goes well with us here, although the rain is unceasing. We are quite deluged, and the harvest is still out in the fields. My shooting is also, of course, greatly injured by the weather. Although I expose myself recklessly to it, and keep out on the hills from six to seven hours every day, a whole week has passed without my bringing down anything; on the other hand, on the 30th, I shot a stag, which surpassed everything that has been seen here for might and strength. It weighed, after being gralloched, 380 lbs.

'Bertie's tour incognito in the south of England has hitherto gone off well, and seems to interest him greatly. Unfortunately, as I have just heard, he was recognised at Dorchester, and an article has appeared in the Dorset local paper. Alfred pursues his studies here industriously, and is as passionately bent on the navy as ever.

'In politics there is great confusion. The Russians, relying upon French support, hesitate to carry out the Paris Treaty in the disputed points. They cajole Sardinia with the view of using her as an instrument of revenge against Austria, and are furious against ourselves. French policy has been at a standstill for two months, as the Emperor was at Biarritz. The King of Prussia bombards us with letters for the rescue of his faithful Neuenburgers, who are not even to be brought to trial, but to be immediately set free to please him, and this even under menace of war on the part of England!

'You will have heard with regret of the death of good Lord Hardinge; a great loss for the army and for us personally.

'Balmoral, 4th October, 1856.'

In addition to the causes of political uneasiness referred to by the Prince in this letter, the state of the Italian Peninsula was at this time far from satisfactory. Untaught by the past, the governments there had reverted to the system of administration which had provoked the revolutions of 1848, and were thus rapidly preparing the way for future convulsions. To this state of things, as it affected Central and Northern Italy, England could not be indifferent, menacing as it was to the peace of Europe, inasmuch as any insurrectionary movement could scarcely fail to bring Sardinia, Austria, and France into collision. In the case of Southern Italy, the British Government had felt bound to be more than silent spectators of what was going on, and they had joined with France in repeated remonstrances with the Government of Naples, at the violation of humanity and justice in the arrest and treatment of political and other prisoners, and at other abuses of their administrative system, which, besides being disgraceful in themselves, were continually giving rise to disputes directly affecting the subjects and the interests of both England and France. Finding these remonstrances not merely fruitless, but rejected in a spirit of defiance, the French and English Governments towards the end of October of this year resorted to the extreme step of withdrawing their legations from Naples, in order to mark in the strongest manner their disapproval of a system of government with which it was impossible to maintain friendly relations.[4]

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[4] The suspension of diplomatic relations with a Government by other States, because they were dissatisfied with its internal administration, was no doubt a most unusual step. Neither Austria, intimately allied as she was with the Neapolitan Court, nor Prussia, thought it necessary to take public notice of it. But Russia issued a remonstrance in the form of a Circular, addressed by Prince Gortschakoff to the diplomatic agents of the Czar at Foreign Courts, in which a principle was laid down as of universal application, which certainly had not been adhered to at St. Petersburg in at least one memorable instance. It said: 'We could understand that, as a consequence of friendly forethought,

Leaving Balmoral on the 15th of October, the Court reached Windsor Castle the next day. On the 19th the Prince thus announces their return to Baron Stockmar:—'We have arrived here safely. We miss the Highlands, but were very glad to see Bertie and the two little boys again. The former has manifestly profited by his tour. In fourteen days Affie starts for Geneva.' When the Prince next wrote to Baron Stockmar (1st November) it was after he had heard of his friend having turned his face towards England, and the pleasure inspired by the news broke out in the following playful sentences:—'I hear that the tail of your comet was seen in Dürkheim, near Oberheim, and that the astronomers in Brussels have calculated, and are expecting, the speedy entrance of your star into their sphere. We think that, once here, it will come within range of the attraction of our solar system, and we are fain to assume that its course, as prognosticated, must carry it over London and Windsor.'

A few days brought tidings from the Baron himself, that he was in Brussels, and on his way to England, bringing his son with him. 'He will be a comfort to you and to us,' the Prince wrote (8th November) in reply, 'as we feel the heavy responsibility upon us of having brought you over. . . . I am convinced, you will be better off here than anywhere else during the winter, which is milder with us than upon the Continent, in Coburg especially.'

On the 17th Stockmar reached Windsor Castle, on what

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one Government should give advice to another in a benevolent spirit; that such advice might even assume the character of exhortation; *but we believe that to be the furthest limit allowable.* Less than ever can it now be allowed in Europe to forget that sovereigns are equal among themselves, and that it is not the extent of territory, but the sacred character of the rights of each, which regulates the relations that exist between them. To endeavour to obtain from the King of Naples concessions as regards the internal government of his States by threats, or by a menacing demonstration, is a violent usurpation of his authority, an attempt to govern in his stead; it is an open declaration of the right of the strong over the weak.'

proved to be his last visit to England. He found his Royal hosts in deep grief. Her Majesty's half-brother, Prince Leiningen, had died at Wald Leiningen on the 13th. A second stroke of paralysis on the 1st of November had prostrated him. His sister, the Princess Hohenlohe, hastened to his side, and watched over his closing days. 'He wrote to me,' she says (14th November), in one of those letters to the Queen which Her Majesty has had printed for private circulation,—a beautiful memorial of a beautiful mind,—'he wrote to me a few days before he was taken ill, that he wished me to come to him for a little while. I did come, to see him die! Oh, dearest Victoria, it is dreadful to see a precious life ebb away, drop by drop, and death destroy so fine a man! His face was very fine during the last days.' And again, a few days afterwards, the Princess writes:—'Oh, dearest sister, I often wished you were there when I had the comfort of sitting near his bed holding his hand in mine, hearing him breathe! and yet it was so distressing, heart-breaking, not to be able to speak with him; for we were always afraid to speak, because he sometimes made an effort to articulate a word, and could not. We were happy when he slept. These days were dreadful—not less so for you at a distance, my own dear Victoria. . . . Dear Vicky [the Princess Royal]! that she should feel that first loss so deeply makes her very dear to me. She will have passed a sad birthday. God bless her and protect her!'

The Queen's letter to King Leopold at this time shows how fully she shared her sister's grief for their common loss. 'Many thanks,' Her Majesty writes on the 19th of November, 'for your dear kind words of the 14th by our excellent Stockmar. Oh, dearest uncle, this blow is a heavy one, my grief very bitter. I loved my dearest only brother most tenderly. You loved him; you knew how delightful a companion he was. . . . Mama is terribly distressed, but calm and resigned, and thinks that God has taken our poor dear Charles in love and mercy to save him from more suffering.' Again, writing a fortnight afterwards, Her Majesty says:— 'I feel my loss very much. A sad, sad feeling comes over me, just when I may seem happiest and most cheerful. We three were particularly fond of each other, and never felt or fancied that we were not real *Geschwister* [children of the same parents]. We knew but one parent, *our* mother, so we became very closely united, and so I grew up; the distance which difference of age placed between us entirely vanished. . . . God's will be done! November has brought us another sad anniversary.'

Writing to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, the Prince thus speaks of this fresh gap in the family circle:—

'My hearty thanks for your dear letter, with the words of sympathy in our grief for Charles's death. I was sure you would feel it. The autumn wind has wrenched away another leaf from our family tree, and the love-united band of our good Grandmama's grandchildren is now poorer by one of its oldest and most vigorous members! In this there lie for us Past, Present, and Future. Poor Mama is chiefly to be commiserated, who thus sees her only son quit the world before herself. She is much bowed down, but composed and touching in her sorrow. For Charles himself death was a release, his life would have been a most sad one. His sons are much to be pitied. Ernest [the present Prince Leiningen] is out and out a good and noble man, worthy of the utmost confidence and respect. He is generally liked in his difficult service, and has already faced many dangers; I wish I could secure him a happy future.

'Fritz William is with us. In consequence of our mourning, his welcome visit takes a lugubrious character; still, as he looks forward to encountering many cares as well as joys with Vicky, their sympathy in sorrow is even now one tie the more. Vicky was greatly attached to her uncle, as indeed were all the children.

'Windsor Castle, 20th November, 1856.'

During a brief stay at Osborne in December an incident occurred to enliven that otherwise gloomy month, and one which was especially pleasant as showing that, despite what had lately occurred regarding the dismissal of our Minister from Washington, no real estrangement existed between the United States and the old country. The ship *Resolute*, which had formed part of the last English Arctic Expedition, and had been abandoned in the ice, having been found sixteen months afterwards by some American explorers, was brought to America. There it was refitted at the national expense, and it had been sent by Congress as a present to the Queen. No sooner was its arrival in Cowes Harbour made known to Her Majesty, than she arranged at once to accept the gift in person, and on the 16th this ceremony was gone through. The effect produced by the prompt and cordial courtesy of the Sovereign upon this occasion may be gathered from the following passage in a letter three days afterwards from Lord Clarendon to the Queen:—'The Americans are most grateful to Your Majesty, and, as Mr. Dallas (the American Minister) says, are overwhelmed with the kindness of their reception here.'

Among the questions which occupied the attention of the Prince at this time was that of the Education of officers for the army. During November and December the Queen and himself were in frequent communication upon the subject with the Duke of Cambridge and Lord Panmure. What the Prince aimed at in all his suggestions is put with his wonted terseness in one of his letters to the Duke of Cambridge:—'Get gentlemen with a gentleman's education from the public schools: do away with Military Schools as a competing nursery for the army. Test their qualifications by two months' probation, and then give them a commission for specific regiments. When they are officers, require them to make themselves proficient by giving them two years' military education at a military college. Don't promote them, till an examination has proved that they have really learned what was required.' In these few sentences is the germ of what has since been done in raising the standard of education for the army,—an object which lay very near the Prince's heart.

This month of December was made peculiarly anxious by the discussions as to the frontier line of the Bessarabian territory to be conceded by Russia under the Treaty of Paris. A singular oversight in not identifying the map which had been used at the Conferences had left an opening for a most critical discussion. Russia, on the one hand, insisted, as has already been stated, on the letter of the Treaty, that the line should pass to the south of Bolgrad, which she would thus have been enabled to retain, thereby securing for herself direct access through the Lake Yalpuck to the Danube. On the other hand, England, Turkey, and Austria contended, that the place shown as Bolgrad upon the map used at the Conference, and which was considerably to the north of the modern town of that name, was that by which the frontier line must be determined, and that the whole tenor of the discussions at the Conferences, as well as of the Treaty, justified this contention, as the avowed object of the line of demarcation was to exclude Russia from the power of interference with the Danube, which would not be effected, if the line for which she now pressed were to be conceded.

During the French Emperor's two months' absence in Biarritz, referred to in the Prince's letter of the 4th of October (*supra*, p. 509), the discussion had assumed a very awkward shape. On his return, however, he had taken the matter earnestly in his own hands, feeling that not a little of the embarrassment was due to concessions to which he had rashly committed himself in his communications with the representatives of Russia. The differences between his own Government and that of England, he found, moreover, were being made use of to discredit the English Alliance. But, as he told our Ambassador (19th December), 'nothing should break up the Alliance; his feeling for England was one of the heart, his sentiments for others were those which policy dictated.' Our Government was not indisposed to a reasonable compromise; and a frontier line suggested by the Emperor, which Lord Clarendon, in writing to the Queen (19th December), describes 'as meeting the pretended requirements of Russia without giving her any important strategical advantages or bringing her nearer to the Pruth,' was ultimately agreed on.

While the Emperor's suggestion was still under discussion he wrote to the Queen (21st December), in answer to a letter which she had sent by the hands of the young Prince of Prussia:—

'Madam and very dear Sister,—Prince Frederick William has handed to me the letter which Your Majesty was so kind as to give to him for me. The very friendly expressions employed by Your Majesty have touched me deeply; and although I was persuaded that the difference of opinion between our Governments could in no way alter your feelings towards myself, I was happy to receive this pleasant confirmation of the fact.

'We liked the Prince of Prussia greatly, and I have no doubt he will make the Princess Royal happy; for he seems to me to have every quality that befits his age and rank. We have endeavoured to make his visit to Paris as pleasant as we could, but I see that his thoughts were always at Osborne or at Windsor.

'I am most anxious that all the discussions relative to the Treaty of Peace should be closed up, for parties in France profit by them in their attempts to weaken the intimacy of the alliance. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that the people's good sense would deal speedy justice to all the falsehoods which have been propagated. Your Majesty, I hope, will never doubt my desire to act in harmony with your Government, and the regret I feel when even for a moment this harmony is interrupted.

'Begging you to present my respectful regards to H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent, and my warm friendship to the Prince, I renew to Your Majesty the assurance of the sincere friendship and entire devotion with which I am

'Your Majesty's true brother and friend,

'NAPOLEON.

On the 28th of the month Lord Clarendon heard by telegram from Lord Wodehouse, our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, that the Russian Government had accepted the proposal of the Emperor of the French for the settlement of the frontier question. One great cause of uneasiness was thus practically removed, and although the Neuchâtel question, in which the sympathies of England were entirely with the Swiss, had led to an order for the mobilisation of the Prussian army, and a sudden convocation of the Swiss National Assembly, it was scarcely conceivable that it should lead to a rupture of the peace of Europe. The Queen was, therefore, able to reply to the Emperor's letter with more ease, and with a lighter spirit, than would have been possible only a few weeks before:—

'Windsor Castle, 31st December, 1856.

'Sire and dear Brother,—I am glad to seize the opportunity of the New Year to thank Your Majesty for your kind letter, while begging you to accept all our good wishes as well for your own happiness as for that of the Empress and of your son. The New Year again begins amid the din of warlike preparations; but I hope that with these preparations matters will stop, and after the friendly communication which has taken place between yourself and Prussia, I have every confidence that it will be possible for you to arrange a pacific solution of this Swiss affair, unfortunately envenomed though it be by wounded *amour propre* on every side.

'I am very happy that the difficulties which arose about the execution of the Treaty of Paris are now entirely at an end, and that what is expressed in Your Majesty's letter as a hope is now a reality. Nothing, I trust, will hereafter take place to trouble that good understanding between us, which furnishes so important a guarantee for the welfare of Europe.

'We were much gratified to learn that you liked our future son-in-law so much. He has written to us full of gratitude for the kindness of the reception you gave him, and full of admiration for all he has seen in Paris.

'My mother is recovering by degrees from the terrible shock she has sustained, and, as well as the Prince, charges me to convey to you their congratulations for the *jour de l'an.*

'I embrace the Empress, and subscribe myself, Sire and dear Brother, ever your Imperial Majesty's very affectionate sister and faithful friend,

'VICTORIA R.'

The same day brought tidings by telegraph, that the map with the new frontier had been signed by the plenipotentiaries that day in Paris. How welcome was the intelligence may be inferred from the closing entry in the Prince's Diary for the year: 'The protocol about the Russo-Turkish frontier is signed in Paris, and thus is the Bolgrad question solved. Thank God!'

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

Correspondence between the QUEEN *and* PRINCE CONSORT *and the* EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

THE PRINCE TO THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

Sire et cher Frère,—Je ne puis laisser passer un autre jour sans vous renouveler par écrit les expressions de toute ma reconnaissance pour tant de marques de bonté et d'amitié que V. M. I. a bien voulu me donner et de tout le regret que j'ai ressenti à la termination d'une visite qui a laissé une profonde impression dans mon cœur. Ce sont ces sortes d'impressions qui ne s'effacent jamais et qui nous servent de compensation dans bien des moments de difficultés et de chagrin que la vie amène avec elle dans son cours. Nos enfants ont été bien touchés de l'accueil qu'on leur a fait en France et ne peuvent assez raconter à leurs frères et sœurs.

L'espoir que vous nous avez donné de nous revoir de temps en temps nous est bien doux. Que Dieu vous protége, Sire, ainsi que l'Impératrice, et la mène heureusement par un temps d'épreuve et de souffrance à l'heureux accomplissement de ses désirs!

Je suis comme toujours,
De votre Majesté Impériale
le tout devoué,
ALBERT.

Osborne, 29e Août 1855.

THE QUEEN TO THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

Osborne, 29e Août 1855.

Sire et mon cher Frère,—Une de mes premières occupations en arrivant ici est d'écrire à Votre Majesté et d'exprimer du fond de mon cœur combien nous sommes pénétrés et touchés de l'accueil que nous a été fait en France, d'abord par Votre Majesté et l'Impératrice, ainsi que par toute la nation. Le souvenir ne s'effacera jamais de notre mémoire, et j'aime à y voir un gage précieux pour le futur de la cordialité qui unit nos deux gouvernements ainsi que nos deux peuples. Puisse cette heureuse union, que nous devons surtout aux qualités personnelles de Votre Majesté, se consolider de plus en plus, pour le bien-être de nos deux nations ainsi que de toute l'Europe !

C'était avec le cœur bien gros que j'ai pris congé de vous, Sire, après les beaux et heureux jours que nous avons passés avec vous, et que vous avez su nous rendre si agréables. Hélas ! comme toute chose ici-bas, ils se sont écoulés trop vite, et ces dix jours de fêtes paraissent comme un beau rêve, mais ils nous restent gravés dans notre mémoire, et nous aimons à passer en revue tout ce qui s'est présenté à nos yeux d'intéressant et de beau, en éprouvant en même temps le désir de les voir se renouveler un jour.

Je ne saurais vous dire assez, Sire, combien je suis touchée de toutes vos bontés et de toute votre amitié pour le Prince, et aussi de l'affection et de la bienveillance dont vous avez comblé nos enfants. Leur séjour en France a été la plus heureuse époque de leur vie, et ils ne cessent d'en parler.

Nous avons trouvé tous les autres enfants en bonne santé, et le petit Arthur se promène avec son bonnet de police qui fait son bonheur, et dont il ne veut pas se séparer. Que Dieu veille sur Votre Majesté et la chère Impératrice, pour laquelle je forme bien des vœux !

Vous m'avez dit encore du bateau 'au revoir,' c'est de tout mon cœur que je le répète aussi.

Permettez que j'exprime ici tous les sentiments de tendre amitié et d'affection avec lesquelles je me dis, Sire et cher Frère, de Votre Majesté Impériale la bien bonne et affectionnée sœur et amie,

VICTORIA R.

THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH TO THE PRINCE.

St. Cloud, 1er Septembre 1855.

Monsieur mon Frère,—Ai-je besoin de vous dire que plus je vous connais, plus j'éprouve d'estime pour votre caractère et d'amitié pour votre personne ? Vous devez en être convaincu, car on devine ceux qui vous aiment. J'ai bien regretté la brièveté de votre séjour, car lorsqu'on a également l'amour du bien, plus on se voit, plus on se comprend. Je remercie votre Altesse Royale de son aimable lettre, et j'ai été bien touché de cette appréciation de votre séjour en France, puisque vous le considérez comme un dédommagement des chagrins inséparables aux fonctions élevées. Je l'envisage du même, et votre visite restera toujours pour moi et pour l'Impératrice un bien doux souvenir.

Je vous prie de ne pas m'oublier auprès du Prince de Galles et de la Princesse Royale comme auprès des autres Princes et Princesses : je ne les sépare pas de toute l'amitié que je vous porte. L'Impératrice est bien reconnaissante de vos bons souhaits et me charge de vous assurer de ses sentiments affectueux.

Je renouvelle à votre Altesse Royale l'assurance des sentiments de sincère amitié avec lesquelles je suis

De votre Altesse Royale
le bon frère,
NAPOLÉON.

THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH TO THE QUEEN.

St. Cloud, le 1er Septembre 1855.

Madame et ma chère Sœur,—Après le bonheur que j'ai trouvé à offrir à Votre Majesté un accueil cordial et empressé, j'en ai éprouvé un non moins grand à savoir que vous avez été satisfaite de votre voyage en France. Certes j'apprécie comme Votre Majesté l'intérêt capital pour nos deux pays d'une union sincère entre les deux gouvernements ; mais j'apprécie par-dessus tout ces relations intimes établies maintenant entre nous et basées sur une véritable et sincère amitié. Car la satisfaction du cœur sera toujours à mes yeux bien au-dessus des satisfactions de l'ambition ; et quoique j'ai éprouvé un juste sentiment d'orgueil d'être un moment l'hôte de la Reine d'un si puissant empire, je me plais davantage au souvenir de la femme si aimable et si gracieuse, de l'homme si distingué, des enfants si charmants, avec lesquels j'ai passé des jours d'une douce intimité dont le souvenir ne s'effacera jamais de ma mémoire. Aussi n'ai-je pas besoin de dire combien je désire qu'ils puissent bientôt se renouveler.

Je remercie bien Votre Majesté des souhaits qu'elle forme pour l'Impératrice ; elle me touche profondément par l'intérêt qu'elle prend à ce que j'ai de plus cher.

J'ai reçu de bonnes nouvelles de Crimée. Pélissier dit que tout va très bien, et qu'il a bon espoir.

J'ai recommandé à Walewski (pour les raisons que Votre Majesté connaît) d'être doux envers le roi de Naples. Il est trop faible pour qu'on se fâche *tout rouge.*

J'ai bien ri de la promenade à cheval que les journaux ont attribué à Votre Majesté et qu'elle interprète si gaîment. Cela prouve une fois de plus combien la vérité est difficile à écrire, puisque un fait qui a eu lieu aux yeux de tous peut être si faussement raconté.

Je prie Votre Majesté de me permettre de lui exprimer le véritable attachement et la sincère amitié avec lesquels je suis,

Madame et chère Sœur,
de Votre Majesté
le tout devoué frère et ami,
NAPOLÉON.

THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH TO THE QUEEN.

Madame et chère Sœur—J'ai reçu avec grand plaisir le Duc de Cambridge, et parce qu'il tient de près à Votre Majesté, et parce qu'il y a longtemps que j'apprécie toutes ses bonnes qualités. J'ai été bien touché de la lettre qu'il m'a remise de votre part. Rien ne peut m'être plus agréable que de savoir, que le souvenir du séjour de Votre Majesté parmi nous ne s'est point encore effacé de sa mémoire.

Nous sommes à une de ces époques critiques, où nous devons nous parler très-franchement ; aussi demanderai-je à Votre Majesté la permission d'entrer dans quelques détails au sujet de ce qui se passe dans le monde politique.

Je commence par repousser toute idée, qui tendrait à faire croire que le Gouvernement Français serait obligé de faire la paix, quand même les conditions ne seraient pas bonnes, de même que je me refuse à l'idée que le Gouvernement Anglais serait forcé à continuer la guerre, les conditions de paix fussent-elles bonnes. Nous sommes, je crois, tous les deux libres de nos actions, nous avons les mêmes intérêts, et nous voulons la même chose ; une paix honorable !

Maintenant quelle est notre position militaire ? Votre Majesté a en Orient, je crois, 50,000 hommes et 10,000 chevaux. J'en ai de mon côté 200,000 hommes et 34,000 chevaux. Votre Majesté a une immense flotte dans la Mer Noire, comme dans la Baltique; j'en ai une imposante, quoique moins considérable. Eh bien, malgré ce formidable appareil de guerre il est évident pour tout le monde, que, tout en faisant beaucoup de mal à la Russie, nous ne pouvons la *dompter* avec nos seules forces. Qu'y a-t-il donc à faire ? Trois systèmes sont en présence.

1°. Se borner à occuper des points stratégiques, à bloquer la Mer Noire et la Mer Baltique, et attendre sans trop de dépenses, qu'il plaise à la Russie de faire la paix. En nous bornant à une guerre défensive et de position, la Russie s'épuise en armements, et nous, au contraire, nous diminuons les sacrifices de la guerre.

2°. Faire un appel à toutes les nationalités, proclamer hautement le rétablissement de la Pologne, l'indépendance de la Finlande, de la Hongrie, de l'Italie, de la Circassie. Ce système, je n'ai pas besoin de le dire, sérait dangereux et opposé aujourd'hui à la justice.

3°. Enfin s'attirer le plus possible l'alliance de l'Autriche, afin que celle-ci entraîne après elle toute l'Allemagne, et qu'ainsi la Russie soit forcée d'un côté par nos armes, de l'autre par l'opinion publique de l'Europe, à proposer des conditions de paix équitables.

Il semblera à Votre Majesté, je n'en doute pas, comme à moi, que le 3^{e} système est le plus avantageux.

Or, aujourd'hui que se passe-t-il ?

L'Autriche nous dit : 'Les propositions de paix qu'aux yeux de l'Europe vous avez proclamées comme suffisantes à vos intérêts et votre honneur, je les accepte, je les développe même, à condition que si la Russie (par impossible) les admettrait, vous m'assuriez que vous consentirez à ouvrir des négociations de paix sur ces bases. A une telle démarche comment pouvons-nous raisonnablement répondre par un refus, ou par des chicanes qui équivalent à un refus? Voilà, Madame, ce que je ne saurais comprendre, car ce n'est pas nous qui faisons des concessions pour avoir l'appui de l'Autriche; c'est l'Autriche qui arbore franchement notre drapeau.

Si le Gouvernement de Votre Majesté disait que les conditions de paix doivent être bien différentes, qu'il faut à notre honneur et à nos intérêts un remaniement de la carte de l'Europe, que l'Europe ne sera pas libre, tant que la Pologne ne sera pas rétablie, la Crimée donnée à la Turquie, et la Finlande à la Suède, je comprendrais une politique qui aurait quelque chose de grand, et qui mettrait les résultats à obtenir au niveau des sacrifices à faire.

Mais se priver bénévolement de l'appui de l'Autriche pour des avantages microscopiques, qu'on pourra d'ailleurs toujours revendiquer, et obtenir dans un traité définitif, voilà ce que je me permets de ne pas trouver raisonnable, et j'appelle sur ces questions si graves l'attention de Votre Majesté et celle du Prince Albert, dont les vues sont toujours si nettes et si élevées. Mon ferme désir étant d'être toujours d'accord avec le Gouvernement de Votre Majesté, j'espère que nous nous entendrons.

Je vous demande pardon de cette lettre écrite à la hâte, et je vous prie de recevoir avec bonté la nouvelle expression de la respectueuse et tendre amitié avec laquelle je suis,

Madame et chère Sœur,
de Votre Majesté
le dévoué et bon frère,
NAPOLÉON.

Aux Tuileries, le 22 Novembre 1855.

THE QUEEN TO THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

26 Novembre 1855.

Sire et mon cher Frère—Mon cousin, le Duc de Cambridge, nous est revenu profondement touché de l'accueil plein d'amabilité que lui a fait Votre Majesté et de la confiance qu'elle lui a témoignée. J'en remercie bien sincèrement Votre Majesté, auprès de laquelle il a été de nouveau l'interprète de mes sentiments. La fête de clôture à laquelle il a assisté l'a frappé d'admiration, et dans la vive description qu'il m'en a donnée, je n'ai éprouvé qu'un regret, c'est de n'avoir point pu y être moi-même présente.

La lettre de Votre Majesté m'a donné la plus grande satisfaction, comme étant à la fois une nouvelle preuve de son amitié, et de son sincère désir de s'entendre complétement et clairement avec moi dans tous les moments difficiles, par un échange d'opinions francs et sans réserve. Je suis animée des mêmes sentiments, et je suis heureuse de trouver qu'il n'y a pas au fond de différence essentielle entre vos vues et les miennes. Nous désirons tous deux une paix bonne et honorable, et vous avez parfaitement raison de dire, que vous n'êtes pas plus forcé d'accepter une paix mauvaise, que je ne le serais moi-même d'en refuser une bonne.

Mais pour bien établir et comprendre la nature de ce qui pourrait avoir *l'apparence* d'une différence d'opinion, il importe de se faire une idée juste de *la différence de position* de nos deux gouvernements, qui doit nécessairement influencer leurs déterminations et leurs actions. Ce n'est qu'en tenant compte de cette différence, que nous pouvons nous juger mutuellement avec une parfaite impartialité et une entière justice.

Votre Majesté a de grands avantages sur moi dans la manière de diriger sa politique et de conduire les négociations. Vous n'êtes responsable envers personne; vous pouvez et garder votre propre secret, et employer dans une négociation l'agent et la forme que vous préférez, et modifier la marche que vous vous êtes tracée, ou par un mot quelconque sorti de votre bouche donner, quand vous le voulez, aux affaires publiques cette direction qui vous frappe dans le moment comme la plus avantageuse.

Pour moi, je suis liée par de certaines règles et de certains usages; je ne décide point d'autorité et sans contrôle; je dois prendre l'avis d'un conseil de Ministres responsables; et ces Ministres doivent s'assembler et tomber d'accord sur une ligne de conduite après être arrivés ensemble *à la commune conviction* de sa justice et de son utilité. Ces Ministres doivent avoir soin que la marche qu'ils veulent suivre soit non-seulement d'accord avec les meilleurs intérêts du pays, mais en même temps telle qu'ils puissent l'expliquer et la défendre au Parlement, et en porter l'utilité à la conviction de la nation.

Il y a cependant à ce tableau un autre côté, où je considère que j'ai un avantage que n'a point Votre Majesté. Votre politique peut courir le risque d'être privée de l'appui si nécessaire de la nation; et la conviction irrésistible, que la nation ne serait point disposée à la suivre jusqu'au bout, pourrait vous exposer à la dangereuse alternative, ou d'avoir à l'imposer à l'intérieur, ou d'avoir à changer subitement votre ligne de politique à l'extérieur, et de rencontrer peut-être les plus graves obstacles. Pour moi, je puis donner à ma politique un libre champ, et lui permettre de développer toutes ces conséquences, certaine que je suis du ferme et invariable concours de mon peuple, qui ayant eu une part à la détermination de ma politique se sent identifié avec elle.

Ces avantages et ces désavantages, inhérents à nos positions respectives, sont très-apparents à 'l'époque critique' où nos sommes, et c'est en eux que se trouvent les difficultés que nous avons à surmonter. Toutefois s'ils sont bien compris et bien appréciés de part et d'autre, il ne devrait pas être difficile d'arriver à une judicieuse solution, tout en ayant en même temps l'égard dû à nos positions respectives.

Je fais donc complétement la part des difficultés personnelles que peut avoir Votre Majesté, et j'impose silence à toute espèce de sentiment d'amour-propre blessé, que l'on pourrait supposer à mon gouvernement, à la suite de cet accord complet amené isolément et sans sa participation avec l'Autriche, accord qui a produit un arrangement que l'on place devant nous tout minuté, tout achevé, pour être accepté purement et simplement, ce qui nous met dans cette désagréable position, ou d'avoir à accepter une convention que l'on ne nous a pas mis à même de comprendre pleinement, et qui s'est négociée, quant à l'Autriche, sous des influences, par des motifs, et dans un esprit dont les moyens d'appréciation nous manquent, ou de prendre sur nous la responsabilité de rompre cet arrangement, de perdre l'alliance qui nous est offerte et dont nous avons pourtant si grand besoin, et de nous aliéner même les sentiments de l'allié qui défend l'arrangement ainsi préparé.

Passant au-dessus de toutes ces considérations, je désire sincèrement et profondément tomber d'accord avec Votre Majesté. Tout ce que je demande pour être en état de le faire, c'est—

1°. Que nous ne soyons pas liés par la 'rédaction' littérale de la proposition dont nous n'avons pas eu l'occasion de disputer le sens et la portée.

2°. Que l'Autriche s'engage à maintenir dans toutes les circonstances son Ultimatum, et qu'elle ne vienne point nous rapporter de St.-Pétersbourg des contre-propositions, que nous aurions, vous et moi, à accepter ou à rejeter, ce qui nous mettrait de nouveau dans la même mauvaise position où nous avons été placés l'année dernière.

3°. Que le traité de neutralisation devienne une *réalité* et non une stipulation illusoire, ce qui serait inévitablement le cas si, comme on le propose, on lui laissait simplement le caractère d'un traité conclu entre la Russie et la Turquie.

Je suis convaincue à l'avance que Votre Majesté trouvera ces demandes fondées en raison. De votre côté, soyez également convaincu qu'ayant donné mon assentiment à ces conditions je ne permettrai point qu'elles soient neutralisées par ce que vous pourriez à juste titre qualifier de 'chicanes équivalentes à un refus, ou par le désir d'obtenir des avantages microscopiques.' Ce que je demande est inspiré par l'intérêt commun que nous avons tous les deux en vue, et je n'y vois rien qui puisse être de la part de l'Autriche l'objet d'une honnête objection.

Je ne puis cependant dissimuler à Votre Majesté mes craintes, fondées sur les meilleures informations, que le langage tenu à Paris par des hommes officiels, et par d'autres qui ont l'honneur de vous approcher, relativement aux difficultés financières de la France, et à l'absolue nécessité de faire la paix, a déjà produit un très-fâcheux effet à Vienne, à Berlin, et à St.-Pétersbourg, et il serait fort possible que l'Autriche fût déjà disposée à reculer devant son Ultimatum, et à chercher d'obtenir des conditions plus favorables pour la Russie.

J'aborde maintenant l'examen des trois systèmes mentionnés par Votre Majesté comme étant en présence.

Je suis heureuse de voir que Votre Majesté rejette le premier, qui, dans mon opinion, ne réaliserait pas même le but qu'il se proposerait d'atteindre, parce que la Russie se garderait bien de 's'épuiser en armements,' si elle était assurée que les Puissances Occidentales se renfermeraient dans un simple blocus ; et, comme nous nous sommes engagés dans une guerre agressive, nous ne pourrions guère retourner aujourd'hui à la guerre défensive, sans avouer que nous avons subi au moins une défaite morale.

Le second système serait dans tout temps rejeté par moi avec la même fermeté qu'il est repoussé par vous, Sire, et pour les mêmes raisons et les mêmes considérations.

Le troisième, auquel Votre Majesté donne la préférence, a également mon approbation la plus complète; mais je ne me dissimule point combien ses chances de succès sont incertaines, car elles dépendent de la décision d'autres Puissances, qui peuvent avoir d'autres notions que les nôtres sur leurs propres intérêts et qui jusqu'à présent ont fait d'ailleurs si peu pour nous inspirer la moindre confiance.

Quoiqu'il en soit, je promets à Votre Majesté de faire tout en mon pouvoir pour faire réussir ce troisième système, et je suis parfaitement d'accord avec vous, qu'il importe d'abandonner toutes les considérations secondaires pour arriver au plus grand résultat.

Je ne dirai rien ici du plan des opérations militaires, parce que je les considère comme dépendantes de la politique convenue. Cette politique ayant été arrêtée exclusivement par les deux gouvernements, les généraux, à la suite d'un Conseil, dont j'approuve fort l'idée, pour rencontrer vos désirs, devraient être chargés de prendre ces plans de campagne en considération, afin d'exécuter la politique arrêtée.

Je suis convaincue que toutes les difficultés et toutes les divergences d'opinion qui peuvent naître sur ces graves questions d'état, seront bien plus promptement et plus efficacement résolues par un franc échange d'idées entre Votre Majesté et moi que par tout autre mode de communication, et je vous prie donc de continuer avec moi ces épanchements, auxquels j'espère que vous trouverez que ma lettre répond avec une sincère et inaltérable confiance.

Le Prince est plus que jamais sensible à l'opinion flatteuse que vous voulez bien exprimer à l'égard de ses vues et de son jugement. Nul plus que lui, je suis heureuse de le dire, ne désire plus vivement le succès de nos idées communes, et n'appuie plus fortement tout ce qui peut y conduire.

J'aurais bien voulu, si j'en avais eu le temps, abréger cette lettre, dont la longueur extrême est toutefois justifiée par la gravité des circonstances et l'importance des questions.

Ayez la bonté de remercier la chère Impératrice de son aimable lettre et de lui offrir nos plus affectueux hommages.

Agréez, Sire, les expressions de sincère amitié et de haute estime avec lesquelles je suis,

Sire et cher Frère,
de Votre Majesté Impériale
la bien affectionnée sœur et amie,
VICTORIA R.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

OK

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